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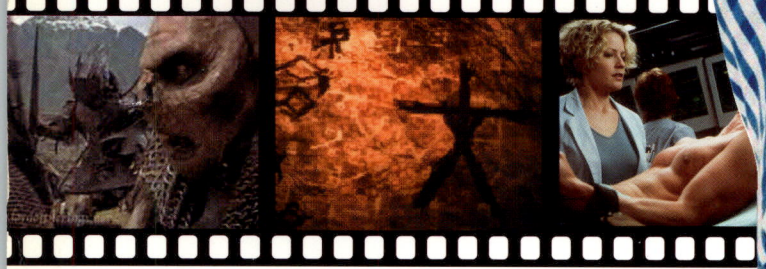

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25 WAYS TO WAP

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DOMAIN NAME PARKING

THE TRUTH • freeparking.co.uk • THE TRUTH

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NEWS. . . .
HAVE TO BE !

The Good News

freeparking.co.uk

EXISTS!

Unlike many companies **freeparking.co.uk** really do offer domain name parking for FREE. The truth is you pay a one-off domain name registration fee from only £14.99 and the rest is totally FREE!

NOTICE

freeparking.co.uk

Domain Name Parking	Free
NIC fee	Incl.
Web Forwarding	Free
Email Forwarding	Free
Release fee	Free
DNS Manager	Free
V.A.T	Nil

The real cost

IT'S ALL FREE.

So why not park for free? contact:

freeparking.co.uk

THE TRUTH • freeparking.co.uk • THE TRUTH

FINALLY THE TRUTH ABOUT

THE BAD YOU'RE GETTING THE GOOD YOU DON'T

The Bad News

It has come to our attention that some companies claim to offer a 'free' or 'low cost' domain name service.

But the real truth is very different.

Hidden charges, annual fees, monthly costs all add up to a very different story..... and one that you pay for.

NOTICE

PARKING TICKET

Domain Name Parking	£?
NIC fee	£?
Web Forwarding	£?
Email Forwarding	£?
Release fee	£?
DNS Manager	£?
V.A.T	£?
The real cost	**£?**

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*No call charges using 0800 number 6pm to 12 midnight Monday to Thursday, and 6pm Friday to 12 midnight Sunday. Local call charges apply at all other times. 24-hour helpdesk charged at 50p/min. Payment by Visa, Delta or Mastercard only. E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial™ & ©Universal Studios.

the net

the net

Flick before you click

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH: JONATHAN GLYNN-SMITH/WWW.CELEBRITYPICTURES.CO.UK

Start using WAP and you'll be a genuine pioneer

Let's say one thing about WAP. It's horrible. Everything about it feels like nailing jelly to the wall, from the awkwardness of keying in 20-letter URLs (complete with backslashes) via your mobile's crummy keypad, to the frustration as your Prague city guide takes all of 10 minutes to download – in Czech. But the potential is amazing. As we found for our feature starting on page 44, there are hundreds of sites already up and running. The best of them enable you to do the awkward business of setting up your preferences and bookmarks on the Web, then allow you access to them on the move. WAP phones are cheap (see pages 32-33 for some examples), as are call charges. And best of all, start using WAP and you'll be a genuine pioneer. Ten years ago, if you weren't a particle physicist then you couldn't get the Web. Earlier still, the first TV sets cost the equivalent of a year's wages to buy. But today, for the outlay of a few quid, you can be right there in the vanguard of a technological revolution.

So in 2020, while your kids are waiting for their cold fusion-powered school bus to arrive, you'll be able to point to the all-singing, all-dancing Web devices strapped to their bodies – and bore them senseless. 'I was there at the beginning, you know...'

Matt Bingham

Matthew Bingham, **Editor**
matthew.bingham@haynet.com

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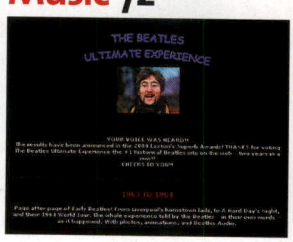

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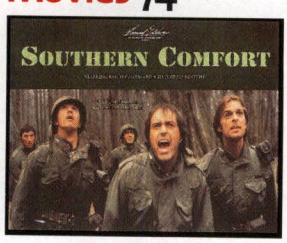

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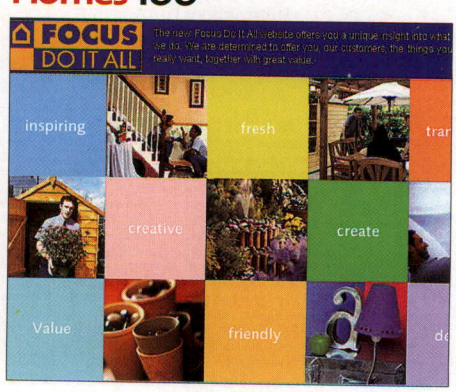

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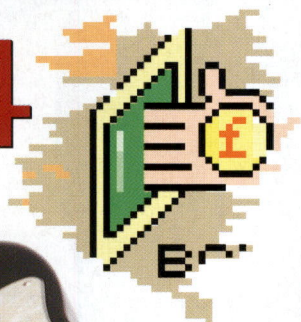

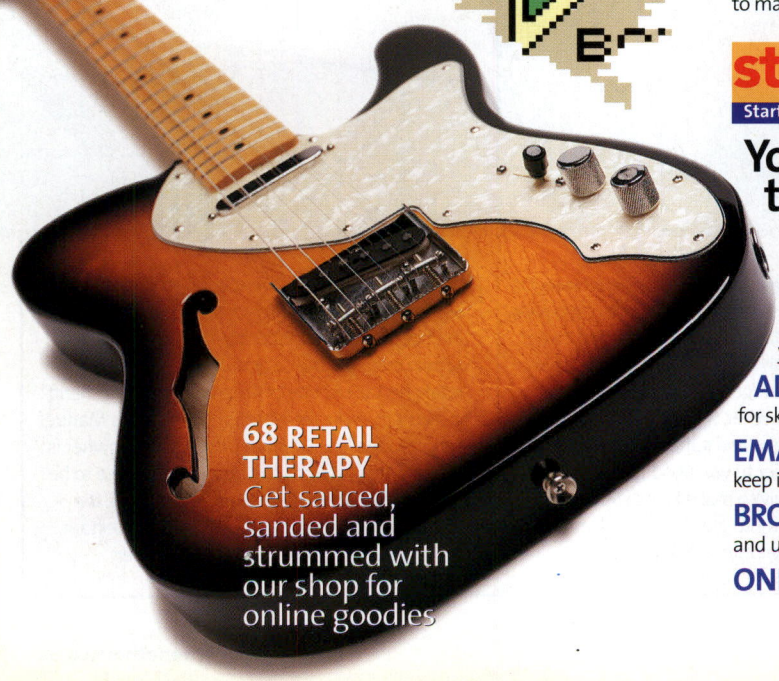

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Get sauced, sanded and strummed with our shop for online goodies

stepbystep

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WEBCAMS

Big Brother: all over the Internet

C4's not the only Webcam show

Channel 4's headline-grabbing *Big Brother* (***www.channel4.com/bigbrother***) comes to a close this month, but it seems the idea of watching complete strangers go through agony has caught on – leading to an explosion of opportunities for voyeurism on the Internet.

There have been other versions of the same thing going on abroad for some time. Check out CBS's three-month version at ***www.bigbrotherzooo.com***. But the Net has proved that you no longer have to be on TV to get an audience to watch.

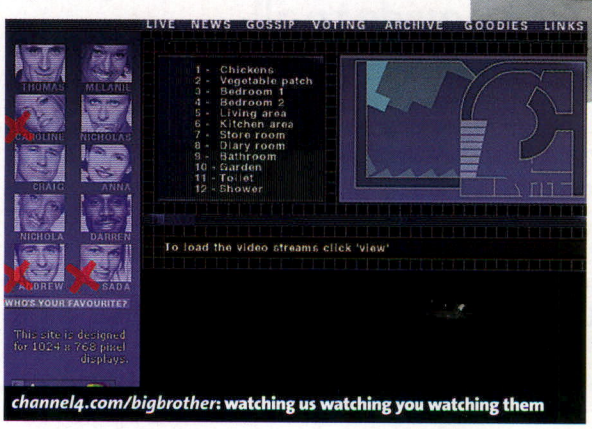
The idea of watching strangers go through agony has caught on

Even before the Internet, looning about in the shopping centre was guaranteed to get you attention. Theatre student and shameless self-publicist Joe Adam agreed to live in a shopping mall for a month (***www.seawaymall.com/joesplace***), taking on the shoppers at basketball (for a fee, of course).

A month is small change to dotcomguy (his real name), who has now completed eight months of his year of self-imposed solitude. Check the cameras at ***www.dotcomguy.com*** to see how he's completely kitted out his 'dotcompound' with items bought over the Internet.

Sometimes, though, a bit of solitude is what's required. Take the recent 'Cold Turkey' initiative (***www.questionit.com/coldturkey***) in Mississippi, which locked five pack-a-day smokers in a flat for a week without cigs in an effort to show teenagers how evil the weed is. However, watching strangers argue and suffer for a week in order to win $500 remains more likely to make kids determined never to give up – or at least never to go into a locked room.

'I always feel like somebody's watchin' me...'



channel4.com/bigbrother: watching us watching you watching them

If that's not punishment enough, try ***www.mcso.org*** for Webcam coverage of Maricopa County jail in Phoenix, Arizona. Publicity-loving sheriff Joe Arpaio installed the $2,000 cameras, maybe to retain his tabloid title of 'America's toughest sheriff'.

Perhaps more pleasant for the public is Manuel Scholz's idea. The German tanning-shop owner is offering free sessions to punters who agree to be broadcast in the buff via Webcam. Funnily, the first to take up the offer was a failed contestant from the German version of... *Big Brother*.

WORDS: GARY PARKINSON; PICTURES: KOBAL, LIAISON, CORBIS, NEWSMAKERS

GOOD NEWS

NET SAVES CANCER MAN

A cancer sufferer pronounced untreatable by the NHS has saved his life by surfing the Net.

Graham Tarling, 45, from Herefordshire, was told that surgery on his 15-inch kidney tumour was too dangerous and that he only had six to 12 months to live. However, Graham to check things out online.

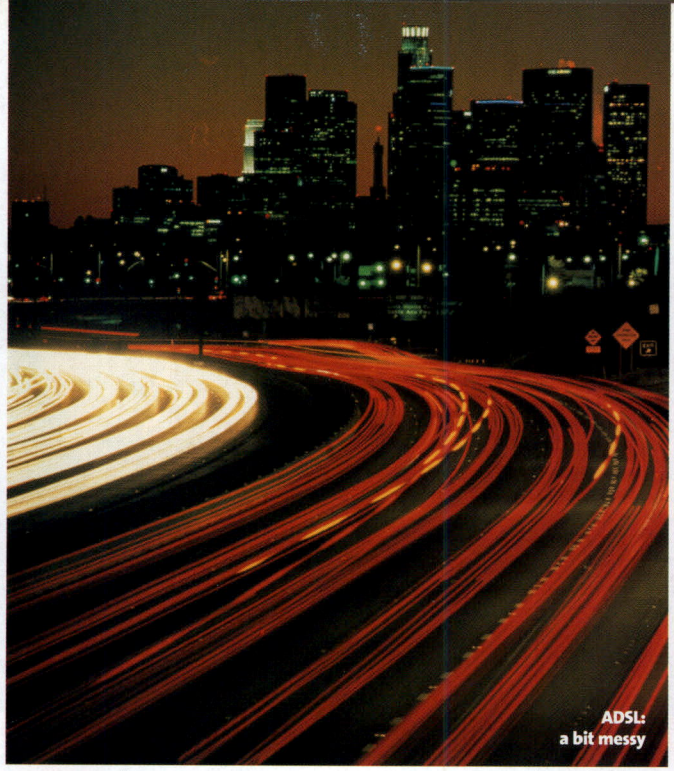
Graham spent two weeks reading up on his condition. Eventually he found a Californian kidney cancer expert who told him of surgeon Dr Andrew Novick.

After perusing Graham's medical

Should have looked up repairs online

records, Dr Novick invited him for a week of tests in Ohio, which proved that the wonder-doc could carry out the operation. Luckily, the NHS stumped up the cash – reported to be between £33,000 and £50,000 – and the 13-hour op was a success.

Graham was a goalkeeper for Bristol City and it's hoped that he will be back in September. There's still a course of chemotherapy, and he'll have to go to Ohio for check-ups. But it's nice to hear of the Net being used for something more useful than buying CDs. As Graham says, 'The Internet saved my life.'



ADSL: a bit messy

KNOWHOW

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT...?

No.15: ADSL

Oh joy, another acronym in the Internet world. What's this one stand for then?

It stands for Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line – snappy isn't it?

No. It doesn't sound very exciting.

That's where you're wrong, actually. ADSL is what you've been waiting for – supremely fast Internet access. What's more it can run on your existing telephone line and it offers an 'always-on' connection. Oh, and did we say with ADSL you can make voice calls as you're using the Net?

Sounds good. What will I get from it?

In theory Web pages will appear in a flash and your favourite MP3 should download in seconds.

Sounds too good. What's the catch?

BT's OpenWorld service will set you back a cool £40 a month. Other ISPs will also offer ADSL, but even with increased competition don't expect the price to drop much. You're also looking at £150 installation fee.

Ouch. What's that for?

You need to have an ADSL modem and a splitter to keep the voice and Net lines separate.

Is the service as good as they say?

Until it's rolled out we really don't know. The problem is that although your personal connection to the exchange is extremely fast (10 times faster than a 56kbps modem) you are sharing an ADSL line with 50 other people. If they are all after large files at the same time it could slow down. Also the speed you receive data is only as fast as the slowest part of the journey – a slow connection on the line will affect you.

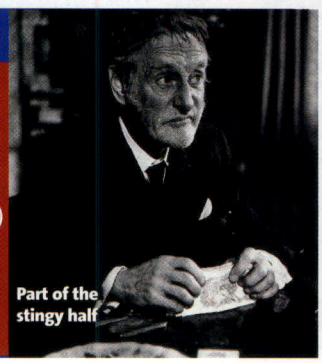
Can I get it now and if so, should I?

You need to live close to an ADSL enabled phone exchange. Currently 35 percent of the UK population do, increasing to 70 percent. You can check out your bit of the world at ***www.btopenworld.com***. It's a purely personal decision whether to get it: there's no doubt everyone would like faster access – but it will cost. For more details check out our complete guide on page 140.

In theory your favourite MP3 should download in seconds

Stat attack Some figures for you to quote down the pub

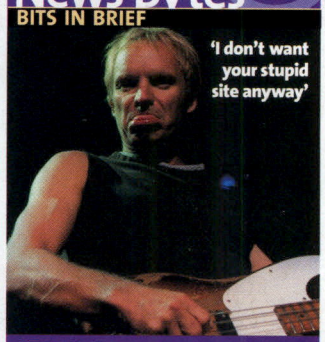
- 51 percent of UK Web users haven't bought anything at all online, according to *Which?* (***www.which.net***)
- Bright Planet (***www.brightplanet.com***) claims that even the most comprehensive search engines only index 16 percent of the Internet.
- 61 percent of email users tell their partners they love them via email. But only one in 10 talk about sex online, an NOP survey shows. (***www.nop.co.uk***)
- 15 million adults in Britain have no intention of going online. And as they won't be reading this, we can call them Luddites. (***www.which.net***)



Part of the stingy half

News Bytes

BITS IN BRIEF



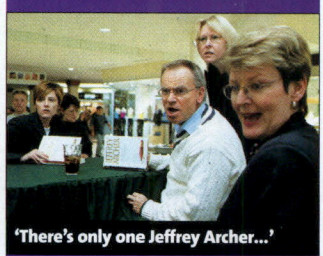
'I don't want your stupid site anyway'

STING STUNG

Being in The Police didn't help Sting when he lost a case over the domain name ***www.sting.com***. The UN arbitrator ruled in favour of Michael Urvan, who registered the name, because Sting isn't a real name. Back to Tantric sex then.

UNAUTHORISED AUTHORISATION

Amazon's in bother from angry



'There's only one Jeffrey Archer...'

authors after impersonators posted fake notes in the site's Author Comments areas. British author Philip Pullman was among those falsely represented; Pullman's imitator even misspelt his name. As we go to press the system is unchanged despite the rumpus. ***www.amazon.com***

PRIVY COUNCIL

We've seen sites in our time which might be described as toilet, but this floats to the top. Officials in Vienna have posted a map of the city's 340 public WCs at ***www.wien.gv.at/ma48/wc***. The idea is to help tourists plan routes so they're never more than a sprint from a facility. Must be something in the water.

Map: toilet, really

TAXING RETURNS

The Net's a great saver of time – unless you're the Inland Revenue. Ads have been encouraging the public to submit forms online. But The Register (***www.theregister.co.uk***) reports that IR staff had to reprint Net forms and input them again – just as they do with postal forms.

Posh Spice's longer style suited her new domesticity

CRINKLY CRIME

Biddies breaking the law

'New Napster' nastiness as naughty Net nans nick needlework know-how

As the Napster circus trundles on merrily through the courts, the Internet world has been rocked by another illegal download scandal – centred around the elderly.

It seems that silver surfers seeking something to sew have been swapping patterns over the Web – and the makers, who are losing £8 a time on pattern sales, are miffed.

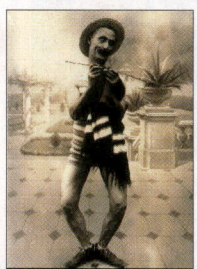
The International Needleart Retailers' Guild has threatened the US-based cross-stitch discussion groups with legal action. Spokesperson Jo Weiss has accused the ladies of having a 'hacker's mentality'. And you can see her point:

Nans didn't know they were doing wrong

some groups have invented names to avoid detection.

President of pattern designers Pegasus Original, Jim Hedgepath, sympathised with the grannies: 'the ladies didn't realise they were doing anything wrong'. Although it didn't stop him from writing to the Web sites hosting the groups to point out the pensioners' transgressions.

The nans may be set to get away with it though, thanks to the expense of the legal system in the US. Lawyer Robert Enders revealed that 'just filing a complaint and getting an injunction can cost tens of thousands of dollars' – money the pattern makers can ill-afford given the parlous state of the industry, which has been in decline since the 80s. Wonder why that is?



Nureyev knitted nicely

PAY AND DISPLAY

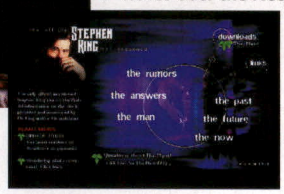
King spooks the publishers

Horror giant posts novel online

One of the world's most popular authors is releasing his latest novel online in instalments. In a move destined to give publishers the willies, Stephen King has experimented with releasing *The Plant* in downloadable sections – for a dollar!

Interestingly, it seems King is testing the waters by introducing an honour system for payment. Users can download the first instalment and cough up the dollar 'at a later point'. The author had threatened to stop providing instalments if

Pay up or else...



payments didn't come in; however, 152,000 fans downloaded the initial instalment (available in text, as a PDF, in HTML for Web TV and Palm Pilot-friendly version) in the first week – and 76 percent are stumping up the cash. 'The pay-through rate has been higher than I dared hope,' beams the author. The second instalment went live on 21 August and King is working on Part 3 for 25 September.

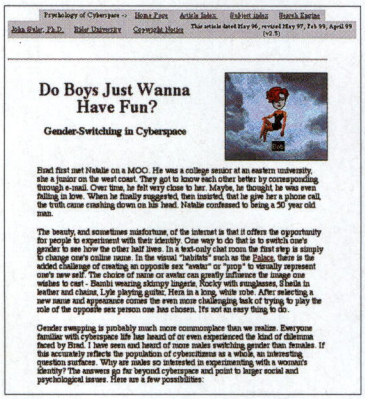
It's not the first time King has released books in instalments; *The Green Mile* was sold in six sections. Nor is it the first time King has sold his wares over the Net; a previous short story *Riding the Bullet* was released back in March.

However, *The Plant*, available from King's own site (*www.stephenking.com*), represents a break from traditional publishing which will have the paper-printers quaking. As King puts it, 'We've proved that the guy who shops for entertainment on the Net can be as honest as the one in a retail bricks-and-mortar store'.

BIRD OR BLOKE?

Things to ask a lady

...to make sure that she isn't, in fact, a he



Psychology of Cyberspace >> Home Page Article Index Subject Index Search Engine

John Suler, Ph.D. Rider University Copyright Notice This article dated May 96, revised May 97, Feb 99, April 99 (v2.5)

Do Boys Just Wanna Have Fun?

Gender-Switching in Cyberspace

Brad first met Natalie on a MOO. He was a college senior at an eastern university, she a junior on the west coast. They got to know each other better by corresponding through e-mail. Over time, he felt very close to her. Maybe, he thought, he was even falling in love. When he finally suggested, then insisted, that he give her a phone call, the truth came crashing down on his head. Natalie confessed to being a 50 year old man.

The beauty, and sometimes misfortune, of the internet is that it offers the opportunity for people to experiment with their identity. One way to do that is to switch one's gender to see how the other half lives. In a text-only chat room the first step is simply to change one's online name. In the visual "habitats" such as the Palace, there is the added challenge of creating an opposite sex "avatar" or "prop" to visually represent one's new self. The choice of name or avatar can greatly influence the image one wishes to cast - Bambi wearing skimpy lingerie, Rocky with sunglasses, Sheila in leather and chains, Lyle playing guitar, Hera in a long, white robe. After selecting a new name and appearance comes the even more challenging task of trying to play the role of the opposite sex person one has chosen. It's not an easy thing to do.

Gender swapping is probably much more commonplace than we realize. Everyone familiar with cyberspace life has heard of or even experienced the kind of dilemma faced by Brad. I have seen and heard of more males switching gender than females. If this accurately reflects the population of cybercitizens as a whole, an interesting question surfaces. Why are males so interested in experimenting with a woman's identity? The answers go far beyond cyberspace and point to larger social and psychological issues. Here are a few possibilities:

Ever suspected that the luscious blonde you're chatting with online may well be a bloke? Well, fear not: a psychologist has come up with a list of questions which should separate the girls from the boys.

For as long as the Internet has been bringing people together via cyberspace, the cloak of anonymity has provided an opportunity to change identities. But popping one of these queries into the conversation might just catch out that teenage boy pretending to be a buxom vixen.

The questions were formed by clinical shrink Dr John R Suler PhD of Rider University, USA (***www.rider.edu***). They include:

- What is the difference between flushable and non-flushable tampons?
- On what day is menstrual flow greatest?
- When is a woman most likely to become pregnant?

Suler wrote the list after asking around 30 women questions that only ladies would know the answer to. Interestingly enough, some of them couldn't answer the questions themselves...

p24601.rider.edu/sites/suler/psycyber/genderswap.html

Success went to their heads when *The Young Ones* hit Hollywood

Net Charts 5

THE WEB'S FAVOURITES: FOOTBALL SPECIAL

BEST FOOTBALLERS' NAMES

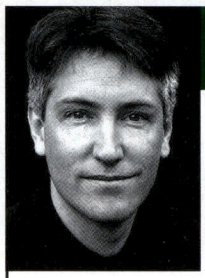
1 Johnny Moustache (*Seychelles*)
2 Trevor Womble (*Rotherham*)
3 Norman Conquest (*Australia*)
4 Forbes Philipson-Masters (*Bristol City*)
5 Quim (*Portugal*)

www.football365.co.uk

FOOTBALLERS' SHIRTS MOST OFTEN STOLEN FROM WASHING LINES

1 Paolo di Canio (*West Ham*)
2 David Beckham (*Man U*)
3 Thierry Henry (*Arsenal*)
4 Michael Owen (*Liverpool*)
5 Marcel Desailly (*Chelsea*)

www.mfc.co.uk

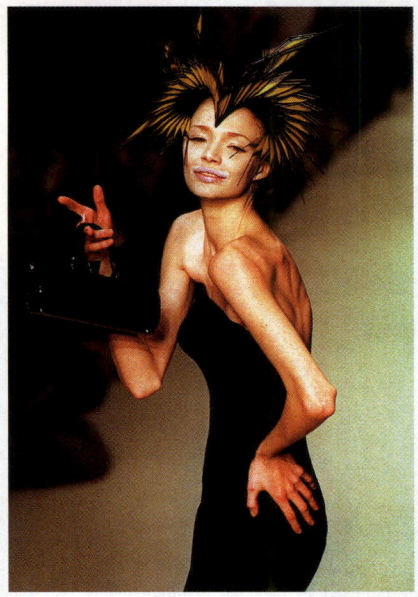


JON CASIMIR

WORLD SURFING CHAMPION

Getting the skinny on a disturbing self-help group

Sometimes, I wonder if I should write about the things I find on the Net that depress me. The argument against doing it is that the act of writing about unpleasant sites helps to recruit people to their causes. On the other hand, not writing about them would be putting my head in the sand.



Which prospect is worse? Perhaps it's the former. I suspect, for example, that one of the only good things about race hate online is that it brings the bigots into the open, where we can respond to their discordant views. Surely it's better than having them skulking in the shadows.

Still, it's not without a little consideration that I'm getting around to mentioning Wasting Away On The Web; a collection of sites operated by 'Anorexics With Pride' – young women, mostly, advocating eating disorders as a lifestyle choice.

Clearly, the Web's power to do good comes at a price

Peruse the DIY Starvation material on these sites – recipes, dieting tips, journals, bulletin boards and medical info – and it's clear that the Web's power to do good comes at a price.

It's undeniable that this new technology pulls us towards each other. It helps us find assistance previously out of reach. I have a daughter with a medical condition which, while not life-threatening, does present problems for our family. I know of parents in my area whose kids have similar obstacles, but it's hard to stay in touch. There is, however, an excellent Web-based mailing list for parents of these kids. The list functions as a kind of support group, with advice and encouragement flowing freely from all points of the globe.

The Anorexics With Pride are the other side of this equation. Their community is all about advice and encouragement too. Trouble is, people with eating disorders do not need encouragement to keep slimming.

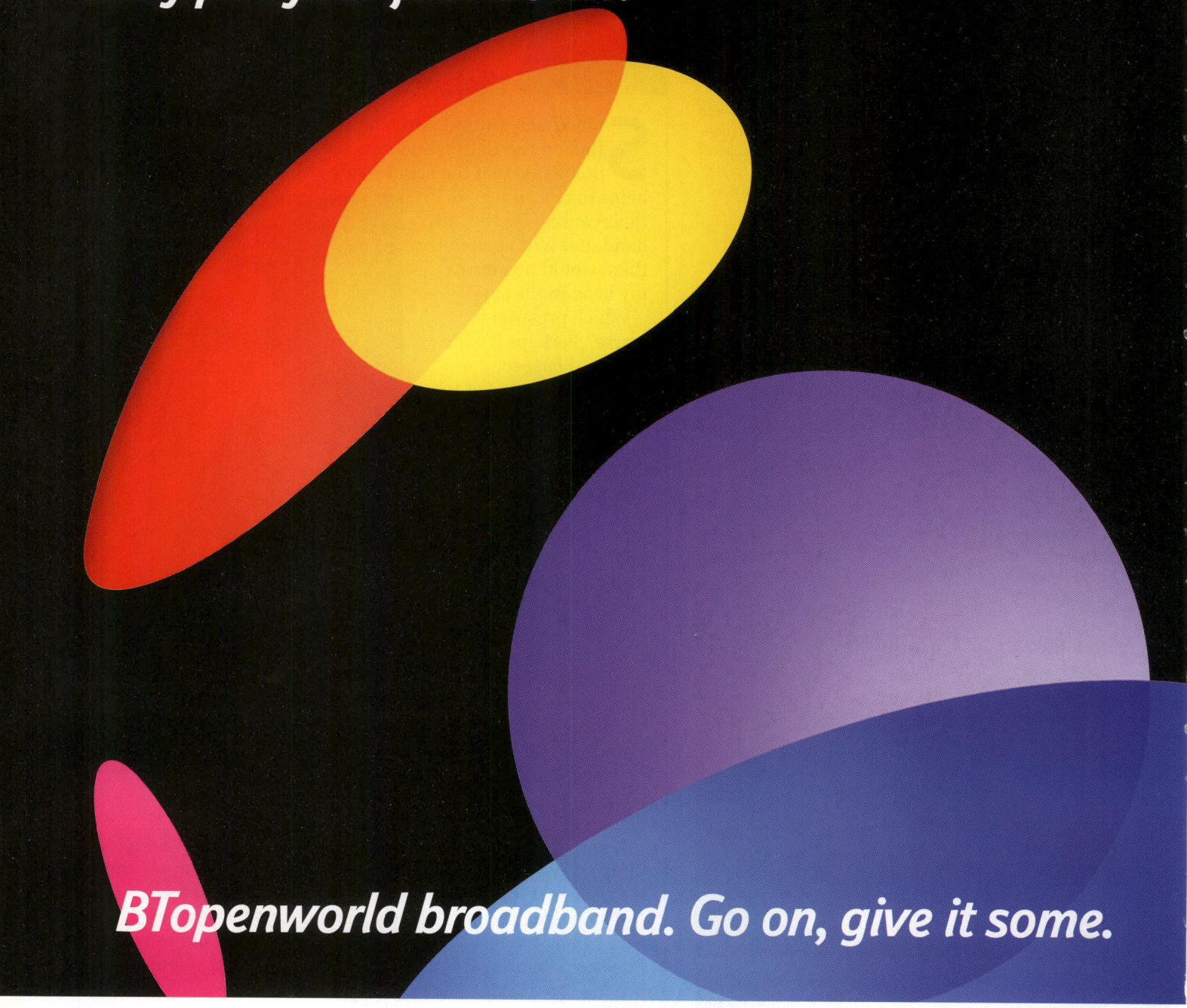
In the end, it would be nice to think we could have one of these groups without the other, but it doesn't work that way. The Net is going to keep on surprising and disturbing us.

www.geocities.com/SouthBeach/Castle/1895/page2.html

PICTURES: KOBAL, PA, LIAISON

While travelling on the information superhighway, have you ever felt the urge to really put your foot down?

BT



BTopenworld broadband. Go on, give it some.

BTopenworld, ADSL technology is here. This is the development that will have the greatest impact on the net in the forseeable future. It means you can get Internet service up to ten times faster than a conventional modem. You'll have an uninterrupted, high speed Internet access that's always on. Giving you access to BTopenworld's extensive content, a cost effective service for residential customers and small businesses. So the net can now be all the things it's always promised to be. All you've got to do is visit btopenworld.com and register. Blimey. Not exactly an option, is it?

BT openworld
www.btopenworld.com

AVAILABILITY IS SUBJECT TO YOUR LOCAL EXCHANGE BEING UPGRADED AND SURVEY. MINIMUM 12 MONTH CONTRACT TERM.

THE BEST, THE WORST AND THE DAFTEST STUFF ON THE WEB

HEROES & ZEROS

If ever a film needed a spot of judicious editing...

MOST NEEDED SITE

LOSE THE PLOT; SAVE HOURS!

Authors and film producers will be turning in their graves. After all, what's the point of spending time and energy writing a script or filming a movie when you can boil the story down into a minute's worth of dialogue and character development? Visit the book-a-minute and movie-a-minute sites and you can catch up on days of reading in a flash. For example, do you really need to sit through all of *Titanic* when this would suffice:

- **Leonardo DiCaprio: Your social class is stuffy. Let's dance with the rats and have fun.**
- **Kate Winslet: You have captured my heart. Let's run around and giggle.**
- **(The ship SINKS.)**
- **Leonardo DiCaprio: Never let go.**
- **Kate Winslet: I promise. (Lets go.)**

THE END

www.rinkworks.com/moveiaminute

'What's geeky about that?'

SADDEST EMAIL

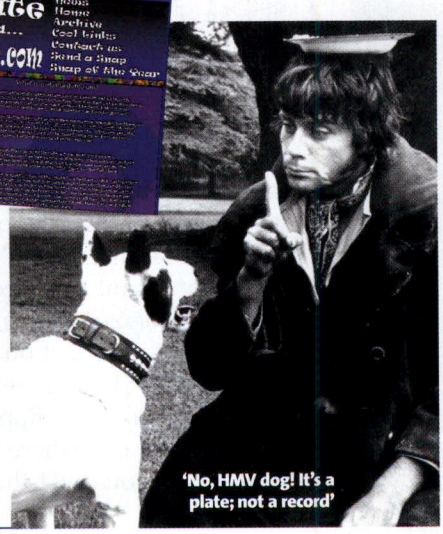
BILL, EAT YOUR HEART OUT

Anyone who sets up a Geek.com Web site and encourages visitors to send emails using wireless devices is asking for trouble. But no one deserves this in their inbox: 'Hi Joel, This is sent from my Revo via SH888 on the beach at the most easterly point in the UK. I've also used the Revo to send emails from a moving steam train. This is handy for keeping up with my shareware registrations while on holiday.'

BEST IDEA Mate-teaser

It's happened to us all at one time or another after a big night out. You have a few too many and, the next thing you know, you wake up in an unceremonious heap where you passed out the night before, clutching the remains of a kebab, in a state of semi-undress.

The 'hangover from hell' is exacerbated by the fact that your mates are sniggering because they took a photo of you in this embarrassing position. In the past, that was the end of the story: all your mates saw the photo and you cringed. Now they can take it one step further with the help of ***mateinastate.com***, where you can email pictures of your friends in bizarre situations and they'll publish it on the Web. With friends like this...

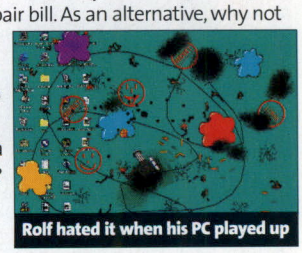


'No, HMV dog! It's a plate; not a record'

BEST TIMEWASTER

STRESSBUSTER

If you suffer from 'computer rage', you may feel the desire to throw Windows out the window or kick it into next week, but this will only leave you with a hefty repair bill. As an alternative, why not use the stress-buster: a PC file allowing you to carve up your desktop using a variety of tools?



Rolf hated it when his PC played up

You can shoot it or set termites to work. Why not carve it up with a chainsaw? It's strangely therapeutic and when you've calmed down, just use the washer and your screen's back to normal again. ***www.gemtree.com/program.htm***

PICTURES: KOBAL COLLECTION, PA, ONLINE USA

DELIVERY

THE WEB BY MILK FLOAT

Technology downsizing to your doorstep

IS THE PACE OF LIFE ON THE cutting edge of technology taking its toll? If so, you'll be happy to hear that the latest bright spark involves the humble milkfloat.

The Internet may connect you to the world and its wares, but you still can't push purchases through a modem. And 'integrated fulfilment service', m-box, are set to join with Express Dairies and Parcelforce to bring Net-ordered goodies to your door.

Let it not be implied that m-box – which delivers goods for e-commerce firms – is a backward company. Indeed, with six ways to order goods and more usual modes of parcel delivery available, you couldn't be more tapped-in to the superhighway. It's just that, incurable romantics as we are at *the net*, we love the idea of a milkie dropping off your Net goodies with your semi-skimmed in the a.m.

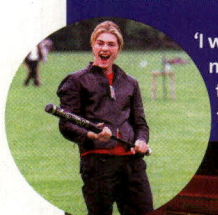
'52 CDs and a pinta for no 11'

SPOKEN WORD

LOOK WHO'S TALKING...

Odd quotes from celebs on the Web

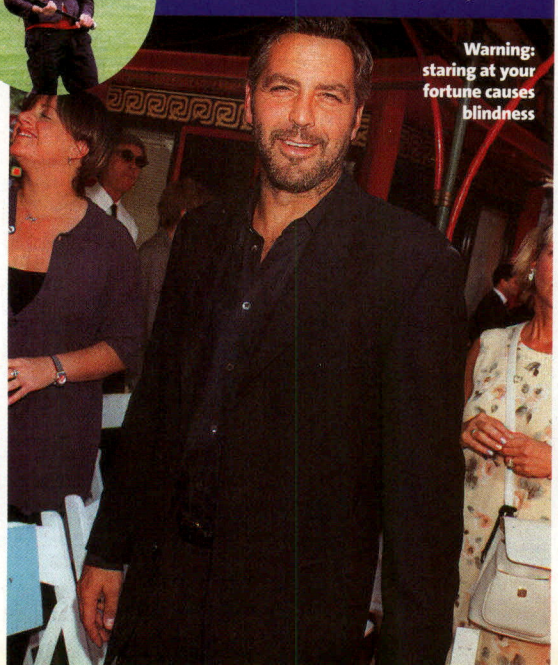
'Nina Simone on ketamene having a fight with Billie Holliday on crack'
ROISIN FROM MOLOKO ON HOW HER VOICE HAS BEEN DESCRIBED, AT ***www.chat.beeb.com/chat***



'I walked into my hotel and there were two naked girls in my bed. Shane and I called security'
BRYAN WESTLIFE GETS ALL ROCK 'N' ROLL AT ***c3.vmg.co.uk***

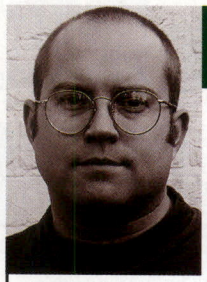
'I grew up in Kentucky, and we tobacco farming. It was menial labour and not a great way to make a living, but nobody dies from it'
GEORGE CLOONEY FLIES IN THE FACE OF MEDICAL OPINION AT ***www.virgin.net***

'I love to drive with my Metallica tapes at full volume. I only wish I could go headbanging, but my hair is too short'
LIVERPOOL'S NEW SIGNING MARKUS BABBEL, AT ***www.sky.com/sports/football***



Warning: staring at your fortune causes blindness

PICTURES: KOBAL, ONLINE USA



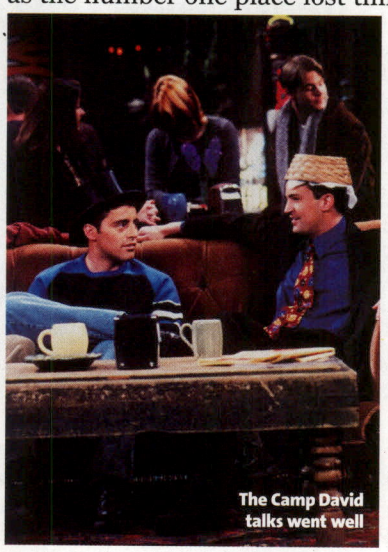
TIM RICHARDSON

WEB WATCHER

How the rest was lost (and where it got us)

We're a nation of losers. You name it, we lose it – money, personal organisers, inhibitions, marbles. Take me, for example – the last thing I lost was my virginity. All right, so I admit I may mislay my keys now and then, but I've yet to lose them irretrievably.

What's more, the item we lose most often is knickers. The good news, though, is that, if they are missing, you're most likely to find them again down the back of the sofa. And it's not just pants, either; the sofa has been scientifically proven as the number one place lost things are found.



The Camp David talks went well

'Seven percent of us use the Net to replace lost items'

How do I know this? Well, because Yell.com says so. Tucked away among all the prosaic statistics about who loses what, when and how, was the mind-numbing fact that seven percent of us use the Net to replace lost items.

People blame the Net for all manner of ills (fraud, porn, digital dependency, etc.), but one of the nastier side effects is that it has spawned a navel-gazing industry spewing out reports and surveys that, more often than not, are banal and almost wholly irrelevant.

For instance, did you know that approximately 80 percent of British men said the nutritional value of their diet could be improved, but that they just weren't sure how to do it? It's true, according to foodies at RecipeWeb.co.uk (***www.recipeweb.co.uk***).

Or that 1.2kg of bovine gallstones (apparently, they're a recognised Chinese medicinal remedy) and a 'hardly used brain' were just two of the wacky items people are prepared to trade online? So says Webswap.com (***www.webswap.com***), which has lifted the lid on the swapping habits of Net users in Britain. Amazing, isn't it?

Or what about this: according to leisuredistrict.net (***www.leisuredistrict.net***), six percent of lovers are in line to receive computer equipment on Valentine's Day. Hang on a mo', this shouldn't be in here – we're nowhere near February! How come this one slipped in? Sounds like someone's really lost the plot somewhere along the line.

Oh, I say, you don't think it's slipped down the back of the sofa, do you?

Listen.

Can you hear it?

Music is everywhere.

peoplesound.com will help you sort through the noise and find new music to your taste.

Whatever you are into, you'll find it - from garage to classical.

Listen, download and own complete tracks FREE.

For the best music, go to...

www.peoplesound.com

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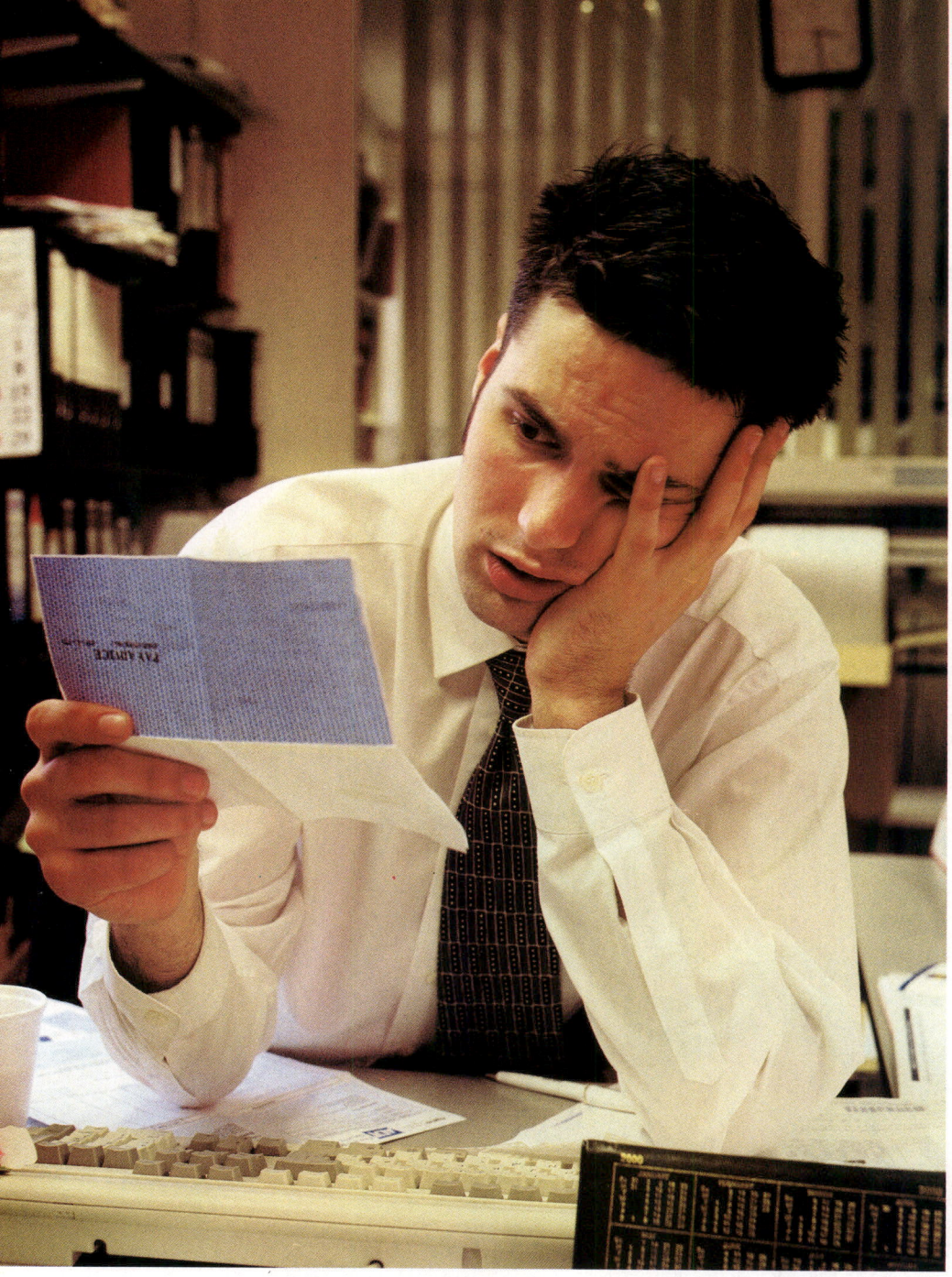
Change the way you discover music



not paid enough?

start taking the piss.

don't work // **play games**

download the best computer games for free at

freeloader.com

The new-look *Fifteen-to-One* studio went down a storm with William G Stewart

LIVE 2000

Earl's Court... or your front room

Visit the virtual reality exhibition on your desktop

September sees the UK's biggest home entertainment, Internet and new technology show come to Earl's Court – but if you can't make it there, you can still enjoy the sights via virtual reality.

Live 2000, which takes place from 21-24 September, is the world's first consumer exhibition to replicate itself in virtual reality form. With the click of a mouse at the Live 2000 site (***www.live2000.com***), virtual visitors can 'e-ttend™' the exhibition, accessing most of the features from the on-land event in 3D format.

Virtual visitors can 'e-attend' a 3D Live 2000

Virtual visitors can access a wealth of information about products and services while 'walking through' a computer-generated world created for the event. You can visit exhibition stands, examine products and services, and chat online with exhibitors and even other visitors. There'll also be online ordering and hotlinks to exhibitors' own Web sites.

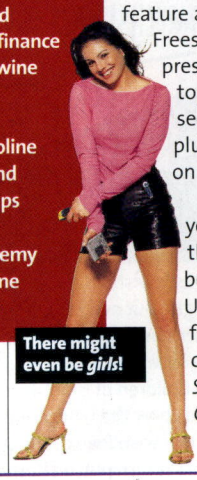
Visitors to the actual event will experience a real-life sensory overload of sights and sounds. From DVD to MP3, WAP to SACD and interactive TV to the Internet, it'll all be on show at Earl's Court. For instance, you can travel to new worlds with surround-sound home cinema at the Warner DVD Experience, a 260-seat theatre.

If tunes turn you on, you can experience music to your ears with the Home Entertainment Zone, supported by our sister magazine *What Hi-Fi?*. Here, you can enjoy next-generation hi-fi systems which recreate the excitement of live concerts (without the sweaty crowds and overflowing toilets, of course).

THE ROCKIN' ONLINE PAVILION

All weekend long, the Online Pavilion will feature presentations from the biggest names on the Internet, hosted and run by *the net* magazine. Guests include:

- 21store.com
- ADSL/ITV
- AOL
- beenz.com
- buyyourwebsitenow
- buzz
- dooyou
- firstresort
- fortunecity
- FSauctions
- FSmotorist
- gameplay
- iCircle
- ihavemoved
- intelligent finance
- madaboutwine
- moonfruit
- multimap
- Online Caroline
- peoplesound
- SmartGroups
- StepStone
- Stock Academy
- World Online
- Waysearch



There might even be *girls*!

As you'd expect from a cutting-edge show like Live 2000, the Internet will be to the fore. You'll be able to sample the latest hardware and online services: WAP phones, MP3, online gaming and e-commerce will all be discussed and demystified. And, just when you think you've got it all sussed out, you can chat to members of *the net* magazine and we'll confuse you all over again.

We'll be knocking about at the Online Pavilion, a specially-designed feature area sponsored by Freeserve. There'll be dozens of presentations every day by the top names on the Internet – see the panel to the right – plus lots of buttons to click on slinky, sexy PCs.

Elsewhere at Live 2000, you'll get the chance to see the fastest thumbs in the business as the Gameplay UK Console Championships finals are played out; competitors will clash on *Soul Calibur* (Dreamcast), *Gran Turismo 2* (PlayStation) and *GoldenEye* (N64).

PICTURES: LIVE 2000

WEBSITES

Make a success out of a failure

Cards, cookery, films and failure hit the Internet

If at first you don't succeed, take delight in the failings of others. Failure magazine (***www.failuremag.com***) is a coolly analytical site explaining how certain margarines and military leaders, among other things, were doomed to disaster. The rolling content covers a wide range of topics – from arts to business, science to sports – and regular features include the 'This Day in Failure' calendar and the weekly 'Bomb Site' movie reviews. If you're having a bad day at the office, make yourself feel better by reading this during your lunch hour.

Then again, you might be of the opinion that food shouldn't be eaten while hunched over a keyboard. If you think that ordering a pizza over the Web isn't the pinnacle of culinary craftsmanship, or you're one of the legions of advocates drawn to the kitchen by Jamie Oliver, you might want to check out Club Chef Direct at ***www.clubchefdirect.co.uk***. As the name implies, it's a club for chefs which sends produce direct to your door – but these aren't your ordinary mince-and-potatoes ingredients; munchies like Beluga caviar, swordfish loin and woodcock aren't to be found at the corner shop. And no wonder when kings of the kitchen (including Rick Stein, Michel Roux and Alastair Little) are among those behind it.

From food to film: Reel Exchange (***www.reelexchange.co.uk***) is, as the name would suggest, a market site set up for film fans to buy, sell and trade their goodies. But this is more than a flea-market dealing in dog-eared *Star Trek II: Wrath of Khan* posters; the site is tailored as much to film-makers as it is to memorabilia collectors. Reel Exchange is just about the only place on the Net for budding Lucases and Tarantinos to place free ads for second-hand film equipment, swap tips, submit scripts and apply for that elusive funding.

Finally, a way around the all-too-regular grind of buying greetings cards and presents. Sharpcards (***www.sharpcards.com***) lets you choose from more than 1,300 designs of cards, but these aren't e-cards – they are the same cards you'd buy at the shops. You can have them posted to your own address for you to send on, or Sharpcards will send it straight to your destination. You can also add a variety of vouchers for a no-fuss present. And best of all for the forgetful, the site also has a reminder service so your Aunty Doris won't be disappointed on her big day.

Failuremag.com: if at first...

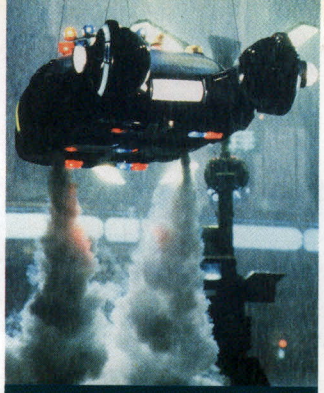
Chefdirect.co.uk: not your corner shop

Reelexchange.co.uk: market site

Sharpcards.com: 'proper' cards

TOTALLY JEWISH **It was a famous Jewish singer-songwriter who pointed out that the times they are a-changin', but even the prescient wordsmith who changed his name from Zimmerman to Dylan couldn't have foreseen the Net explosion. Totally Jewish (*www.totallyjewish.com*) is an extensive portal site providing a destination for the Children of Israel. Jewish-oriented news and features from around the world cover the hard stories, but there's a streak of self-mocking humour – be it the Jewish Joke of the Day or the Web soap *Baruchside* (featuring the Rabbi's return pub on Koshernation Street).**

WEBSITE WORDS: GARY PARKINSON; PICTURES: ONLINE USA, LIAISON, IMAGENET



BEST-SELLING DVDS

1 *The World is Not Enough* – Special Edition
2 *Deep Blue Sea*
3 *South Park: Bigger, Longer and Uncut*
4 *Blade Runner – The Director's Cut*
5 *The Truman Show*
6 *Star Trek – Insurrection*
7 *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*
8 *Analyze This*
9 *Starship Troopers*
10 *Die Hard with a Vengeance*

www.dvdstreet.co.uk

BEST SELLING BOOKS

1 *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* JK Rowling
2 *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* JK Rowling
3 *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* JK Rowling
4 The Return of the Naked Chef Jamie Oliver
5 Turning Thirty Mike Gayle

www.amazon.co.uk

Proof money makes you miserable

TOP IMDB NAME SEARCHES

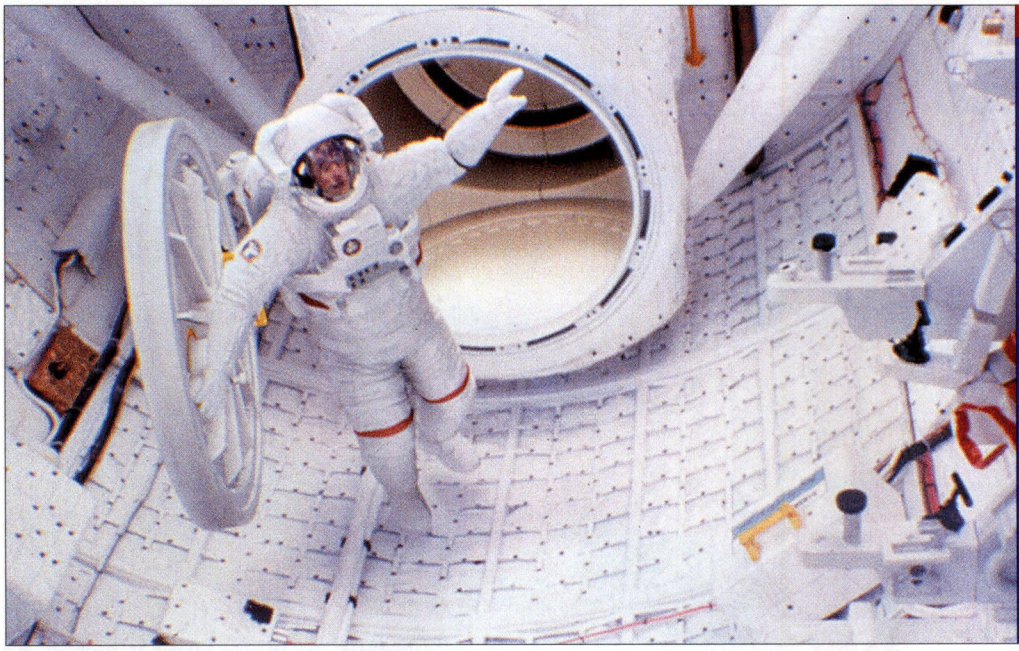
1 Piper Perabo
2 Hugh Jackman
3 Angelina Jolie
4 Clint Eastwood
5 Kevin Bacon

uk.imdb.com

TOP COMPUTER GAMES

1 *Pokemon Yellow* (Nintendo Gameboy)
2 *Formula 1 Grand Prix 3* (IBM PC CD-ROM)
3 Driver GT Interactive (Sony Playstation)
4 Tony Hawk's Skateboarding (Sony Playstation)
5 WWF SmackDown (Sony Playstation)

www.gamesdomain.co.uk



MOVIE OF THE MONTH

Space Cowboys

★★★★★

Clint Eastwood, Tommy Lee Jones

If John Glenn did it, why can't Hollywood? Four pilots denied the chance to be astronauts in 1958 get their day 40 years later when only they can salvage a stricken satellite. Okay, space clichés abound, but this is bolstered by the massive charisma of the leads and some hilarious moments. The first-rate effects fight for the limelight, but they cannot outshine the wonderfully played rivalry between Clint and Tommy.

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD ***www.spacecowboys.net*** *This is a decent, expansive site stuffed with video and audio clips.*

MOVIES

Cowboy junkie

Danny Graydon enjoys a trip into outer space

Titus ★★★★

Anthony Hopkins, Jessica Lange

Proudly over the top and going for broke, this adaptation of an over-looked Shakespeare work isn't perfect, but it flaunts the play's flaws with verve and conviction. Hopkins makes a vicious and depraved Titus, dishing out the violence with lip-smacking abandon in pseudo-fascist Rome. Like a modern horror flick, flashy melodrama replaces depth. Such confidence deserves an audience. ***www.foxsearchlight.com/titus/index.html*** *Flash-only site with a freaky 'Nightmare' clips section.*

Wonder Boys ★★★★

Michael Douglas, Katie Holmes

This funny and touching tale of American campus life finds Michael Douglas giving an expertly muted performance as a depressed, perma-stoned college professor. Douglas perfectly captures the life of someone permanently stuck in student mode, ever at conflict with ambition and achievement. Directed with finesse by Curtis Hanson (*LA Confidential*), this is a character piece of class and distinction.

www.wonderboysmovie.com *Fun site with an ad-lib storytelling game.*

Me, Myself and Irene ★★★

Jim Carrey, Renee Zelwegger

After his Proper Actor stint, Jim Carrey gurns for his supper as the schizophrenic cop whose sweet lug/hard psycho personalities are in love with the same woman. Carrey's excellent Jekyll and Hyde riff is all manic ingenuity, with his dark alter-ego providing a tour-de-force 'transformation' scene. Despite a few misjudged gags, Carrey is back in his best arena.

www.memyselfandirene.com *Fun site(s) based on the Charlie or Hank personalities.*

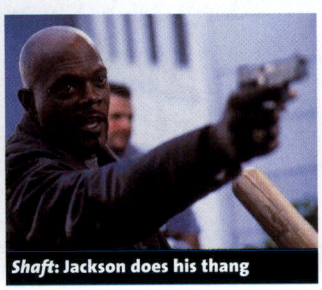
Hamlet ★★

Ethan Hawke, Kyle MacLachlan

Set in corporate America with a Generation X bent, this commits the one unpardonable sin with Shakespeare: making it boring. Not content to ignore the play in favour of a bland, done-to-death media-is-bad lecture, Ethan Hawke takes Hamlet's seething intensity and reduces him to a brooding wimp. Bill Murray shines as Polonius, but it's all far too staid. Tragic.

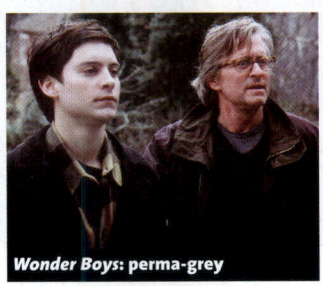
www.rottentomatoes.com/movies/titles/hamlet *In the absence of an official site, try Rotten Tomatoes.*

***Dancer in the Dark*: deep breath**

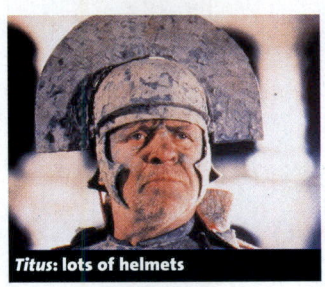


***Shaft*: Jackson does his thang**

***Keeping the Faith*: rom-com**



***Wonder Boys*: perma-grey**



***Titus*: lots of helmets**

Shaft 2000 ★★★

Samuel L Jackson, Christian Bale

Fact: the original *Shaft* had an attitude. This update, though, has its moments, but it's a blaxploitation flick trapped in a by-the-numbers vigilante cop story. Jackson looks the part, doing his *Pulp Fiction* thang to the hilt, but he's the latest in a long line of rebellious cops who hate the goddamn system. An impressive cast aside, it loses the original's finer aspects. It's OK, but not 'smokin'.

www.shaft-themovie.com *Download MP3s or play Shaft pinball. No, really.*

Dancer In The Dark ★★

Björk, Catherine Deneuve

Don't let the prestigious Cannes award sway you: Lars Von Trier's latest manipulative tale of love and sacrifice is self-indulgent, and done better in his other films. As the blind, musical-obsessed factory worker, Bjork's success hangs on whether you find her indescribably annoying anyway while Deneuve looks forever uncomfortable. New material please.

www.dancerinthedark.com *A bit basic but informative nonetheless.*

Where The Heart Is ★★

Natalie Portman, Ashley Judd

Portman is the abandoned teen mother who goes from one contrived melodrama to the next as everyone she meets turns out to be a good old, salt-of-the-earth eccentric. The dizzying degree of improbable circumstance and sugary morality threatens to undo Portman's impressive work as Novalee, ably supported by Judd.

www.wheretheheartismovie.com *A sickly-sweet consequences game.*

Keeping The Faith ★★★

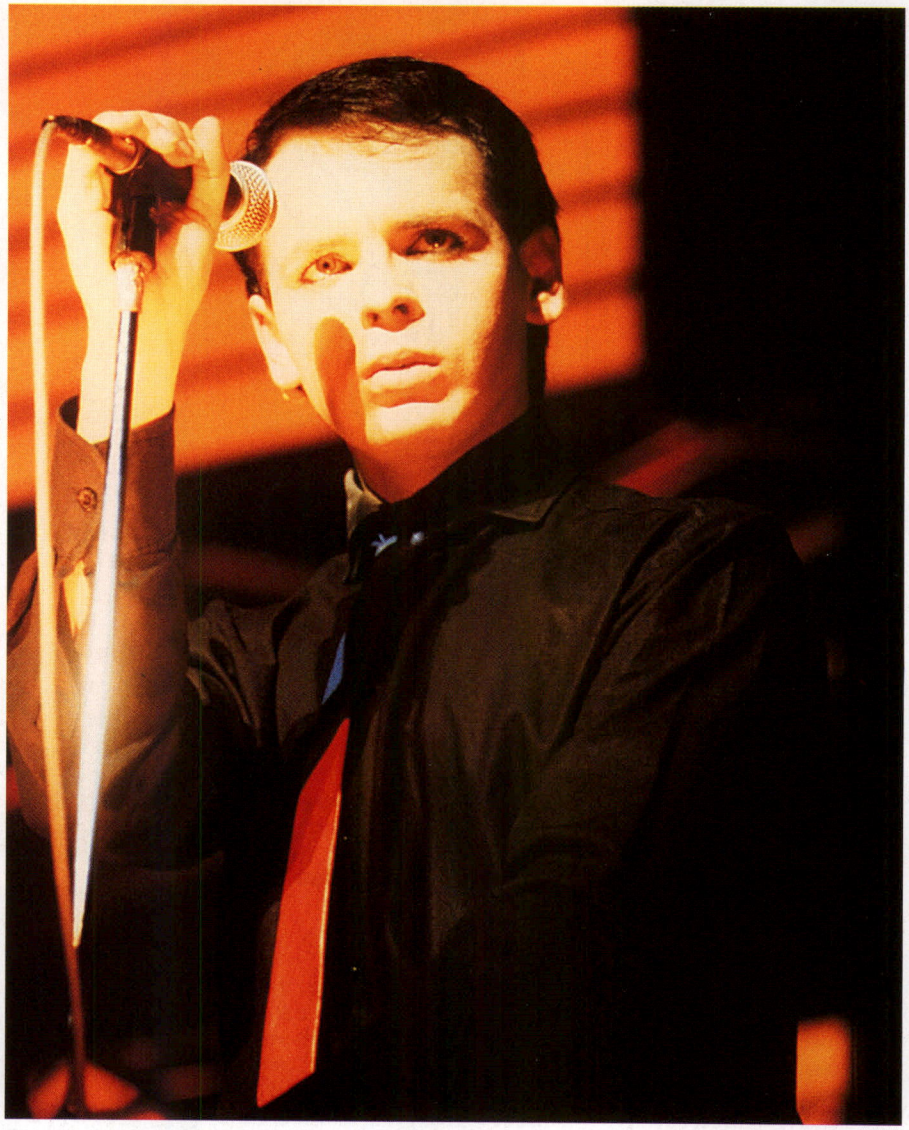
Edward Norton, Ben Stiller

Norton's directorial debut, about a priest and a rabbi who fall in love with the same woman, is only a middling rom-com but has that much sought-after asset: charm. Norton, Stiller and love-interest Jenna Elfman all convince as the mismatched trio. Unfortunately, overlength, misjudged slapstick and a weak ending damage what is otherwise a well-handled comedy.

studio.go.com/movies/keepingthefaith/ *A selection of clips.*

MUSIC ALBUM OF THE MONTH

Gothic Gary's a new man



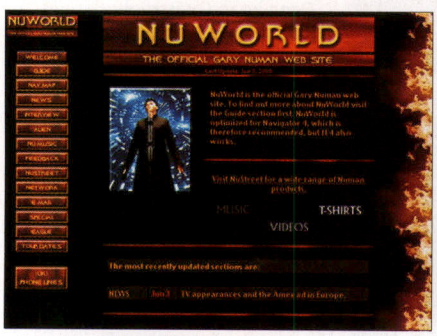
Numan's newest album is the cat's meow, says John Mullen

Gary Numan

Talking With Shadows ★★★★★

This 500 woman-shagging, Tory-voting Essex-boy has a gift for confusing people. His blend of technology and tomfoolery has spawned a generation of US goths – from Nine Inch Nails to Marilyn Manson – and now he's made a record that sounds like it was cribbed from Trent Reznor rather than the other way round. This is pure, cat-scaring stuff: *Rip* is vicious techno-rock, while *Pure* is his most intoxicating track since *Cars*.

www.numan.co.uk *The paranoid android's official site, essential to Numanoids for the opportunity to email the man himself.*



MUSIC NEW RELEASES

Mansun

Little Kix **PARLOPHONE** ★★★★

Eschewing such easy reference points as The Beatles and Nirvana, Mansun's ears seem more attuned to the likes of Queen. Which means that, like Marmite, they're an acquired taste. To believers, the operatic likes of *Goodbye* or *Sunshine* are marvellous anthems; to detractors, it's a load of tosh. But isn't it nice to have a band that demands an opinion?

www.mansun.co.uk *A site so comprehensive that it borders on the anal. Gives the opportunity to arrange meet-ups with other fans.*

Björk

Dancer In The Dark

ONE LITTLE INDIAN ★★★★

A deeply strange album, even by the Icelandic artist's standards. Singing in character as a simple ingénue, this isn't going to appeal to the dance fraternity she picked up with songs like *Big Time Sensuality*. But its deceptively soothing strains are still sublimely heartbreaking. Featuring splendid duets with Catherine Deneuve and Thom Yorke, the only problem is the tongue-twisting titles (exactly how do you pronounce *Cvalda*?).

bjork.intimate.org *Excellent fan site, with an up-to-date news service, photo gallery and comprehensive gigography.*

The Waterboys

A Rock In The Weary Land

RCA ★★★

For the first Waterboys album in a decade, singer Mike Scott has finally abandoned his faux-Irishness for a more basic rock approach. And while his lyrics are still cringeworthy (who else could write a song called *Dumbing Down The World*?), the simple crotch-rock of *Maladdiction* shows that Scott can still blow out the speakers with the best of them.

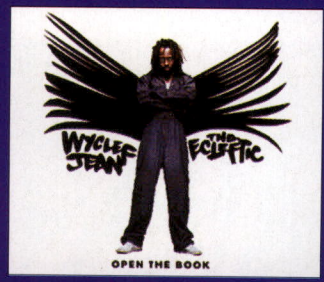
www.waterboys.co.uk *One of the best band sites on the Web, from a gargantuan history of the band to personal missives from Mr Scott.*

Wyclef

Ecleftic **COLUMBIA** ★★★

That's Wyclef Jean, whose full name summons up unwelcome images of that useless spanner in Fugees who spoiled all their songs by yelling 'one time!' all over the divine lungs of Lauryn Hill. But (and I'm as surprised by this as you are), this is hearty, rump-moving stuff, especially the cannabis-loving pop-song *Homegrown*. What next? Andrew Ridgeley as a speed-garage DJ?

www.wyclef.com *Sexy Sony site with an animated Wyclef and behind-the-scenes footage.*



PICTURES: RETNA, ANGELA LUBRANO

MUSIC Q&A

OUR FRIEND'S ELECTRIC

Electro godfather Gary Numan on speedboats, MP3s and space

Your new album has quite a heavy, industrial feel. What artists have you been listening to? Was it a difficult album to record?

I've been a Nine Inch Nails fan for a long time and, during the writing and recording of the new album, I was also listening to The Deftones, Fear Factory, Curve, Filter, Korn, Smashing Pumpkins and Limp Bizkit. I don't really have the voice to do justice to that kind of power, so I have to turn those influences into something that makes sense for me.

I did find the album very difficult to make. I had tightly controlled guidelines for the new record because I was very sure about what it should be. Mix that in with a lack of self-belief and the realisation that it was important to get the new album right if my career was to have a future, and you have a recipe for misery.

How closely are you involved in your Web site; do you ever do Web chats with fans? And what makes a good Web site for you?

I run my own Web site single-handedly, having taught myself HTML years ago. The site has been a very positive, but time-consuming experience. It's a tiny cottage industry with virtually no outside help; the Net has made it possible to operate on a worldwide basis from our own homes. I like it that way. And, although I don't have Web chats with fans on my own site, I have taken part in many online discussions on other sites.

For me, a good Web site is one that is easy to move around, loads quickly and has up-to-date, useful information. I get tired of flashy graphics that get in the way and music that plays automatically when the page loads.

What sites do you enjoy using? Do you ever do any online shopping?

I don't sit at my computer and tour the Net on a daily basis. I use it as an information source primarily. I'll be in Florida soon, so I checked up on the Space Shuttle launch schedules. A friend of mine developed an unusual illness and I found reams of info about it on the Web; I check out animal rights activist sites, weather info when I'm travelling. I have bought things from the Web, but not that much and not that often – although I've just bought a speedboat that I found on the Net.

What do you think about the Napster controversy? As an artist, are you worried about how it might affect royalties, or do you think it could have any positive aspects? Do you ever download MP3s yourself?

People are often scared of new technologies, especially if they think it might lose them some money. I do understand that concern but, in this case, I don't share it. Maybe if I made more money from records I would have a different point of view. I have downloaded MP3s, but they were bootlegs of my own stuff. I wanted to hear for myself just how good or bad MP3s were, and how easy to get. I honestly wouldn't download illegal music, but, then again, I can easily afford to buy the real thing. For those that can't, I sympathise.

GIG GUIDE

Autumnal gigs for audio fun

LOU REED

Lou brings his all-star dancing revue to a venue near you.
1 September Birmingham Symphony Hall
2 September Bristol Colston Hall
4 September Sheffield City Hall **5 September** Shepherd's Bush Empire **7 September** Manchester Apollo
8 September Glasgow Royal Concert Hall
14 September Portsmouth Guildhall
www.loureed.org

LAMBCHOP

Country music played by a 15-piece band.
23 September London South Bank Royal Festival Hall **24 September** Dublin Olympia
www.landlocked.net/lambchop/

RADIOHEAD

The year's most essential gigs.
23-25 September London Hackney Victoria Park **28-29 September** Glasgow Green
1-3 October Warrington Victoria Park
6-8 October Dublin Punchestown Racecourse
www.radiohead.com

JULIAN COPE

Scouse ley line fanatic hits the stage.
6 October Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
7 October Edinburgh Liquid Rooms
9 October Leeds City Varieties
www.juliancope.com

Reef

Getaway S2 ★★

Now onto their fourth album (Jesus wept), Reef are obviously as bored as kids on a school-trip to *Macbeth*. So on this album they've attempted to reinvent themselves as masters of the dancefloor rather than the moshpit, and it's about as convincing as a duck trying to pass itself of as a jaguar. Undoubted low-point: the disco pastiche of *Set The Record Straight*. A return to their air-guitar roots is highly advisable.

www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Stage/6188/ *A chance to swap your favourite Reef experiences with other hirsute devotees.*

Scott Walker

Scott/Scott 2/Scott 3/Scott 4 **FONTANA** ★★★★★

When Mr Walker curated a mini-festival on the South Bank this year, he managed to attract the likes of Radiohead, Blur, and Elliott Smith to play gigs for him. He's held in high esteem for these four albums, featuring his musings on life, philosophy and girls, and all held together with the most sublime voice ever. Walker will probably never sing either on record or live ever again, but maybe it's because it would be impossible to top this essential purchase.

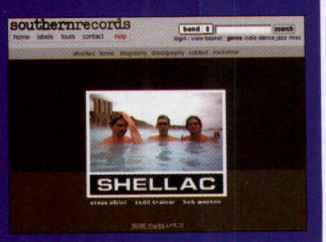
www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/3177/scottwalker.html *A super collection of pics of the great man himself.*

Shellac

1000 Blows **TOUCH AND GO** ★★★★

Fronted by Steve Albini (producer of Nirvana, PJ Harvey and Pixies), Shellac create music that's so hard and metallic, it's difficult to believe that warm-blooded humans had any hand in its making. Which, believe it or not, is a compliment. Compared to the irritating niceness of Travis, the steely-eyed likes of *Squirrel Song* are bracing in their savage purity.

www.southern.com/southern/band/SHLAC/ *The official site; fairly dull presentation, but plenty of links to other groups like The Action Time.*



GAMES

Resistance is useful

The best new games on the street – and their sites

Age of Empires II Expansion Pack: The Conquerors (PC)

Age of Empires II is *the* strategy game – superb game play and artificial intelligence that really works. And it's about to get better with the addition of *The Conquerors* expansion pack. The biggest draw may be the new civilisations such as Aztec, Mayan and the Huns, but for us it's the small tweaks – being able to create ship formations – that will make *Age of Empires* even better.

www.microsoft.com/Games/conquerors ★★★★★ *Microsoft does the business with tips for global domination. Well, they should know.*

Star Trek: Klingon Academy (PC)

Just as the excellent *Star Wars: Force Commander* allows you to take on the mantle of the dark side and crush the Rebels, *Star Trek: Klingon Academy* puts you in command of the baddies against the wishy-washy Federation. There's a copious amount of Full Motion Video to move the story line along; Trekkies will love it, but others should consider buying *FreeSpace2* instead.

www.klingonacademy.com/index.html ★★★ *As you'd expect, the site provides more than enough details to get you through a convention.*

Virtua Tennis (Dreamcast)

The Dreamcast continues to leads the way in sports games with the release of *Virtua Tennis*. Similar in feel to the arcade version, the game allows enthusiasts to revel in the 3D graphics and great gameplay. Our recommendation: get three mates round, choose from the world's best players and partake of doubles.

www.sega.com/sega ★★★★ *Sega's site combines stunning visuals with the alluring promise of console-based online gaming.*

Metropolis Street Racer (Dreamcast)

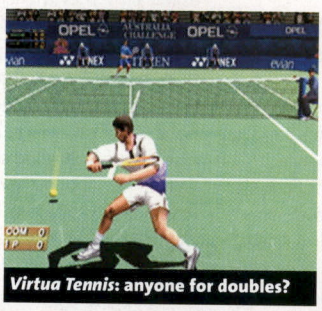
The latest in a long line of Sega racing games, *Metropolis Street Racer* on the Dreamcast allows you to bomb around a selection of the world's biggest cities at breakneck speed without fear of being caught and having to travel by bus for the next year. Visuals and options are first rate and you can upload your best times to Sega's Web site.

www.bizarrecreations.com/games.htm ★★★★ *Get a head start on the opposition at the developer site.*

Age of Empires II: smart

Metropolis: no bus worries

Klingon Academy: Federation-bashing



Virtua Tennis: anyone for doubles?

Speedball 2100 (PlayStation)

Hands up if you once owned an Amiga or Atari ST. If so, you'll be thrilled that *Speedball* is back. The graphics on this PlayStation version are naturally superior to the original, but the premise – basically *Rollerball* meets five-a-side football meets *Gladiators* – is the same, so prepare to slam opponents into the wall!

www.bitmap-brothers.co.uk/SB2100.htm ★★★★ *The Bitmap Brothers' Web site gives an insight into past glories and future plans.*

Infestation (PC & PlayStation)

Not groundbreaking, but certainly fun: a third-person shooter featuring a versatile buggy, in which you have to fight off aliens. From the same stable as the blinding *V2000*, this lets you play across 22 single-player worlds. You'll need a dedicated 3D graphics card, but it's a good excuse to get one if you haven't already.

www.ubisoft.co.uk ★★★ *Site with info on many Ubi Soft titles.*

Arabian Nights (PC)

Third-person actioner *Arabian Nights* aims to revolutionise the market by making this Internet-exclusive game available for download in instalments. You can pay per download (£3.99), or up front (£14.49), and going on what we've seen this is a bit of a bargain, as the sexy graphics and enticing storyline look like making it a winner.

www.visiware.com ★★★★ *You'll need this URL for the latest game instalments. Obviously.*

John Prescott mucked up another passport photo

GAME OF THE MONTH

Freedom: First Resistance (PC)

From the creators of *Rainbow Six* – based on a Tom Clancy novel – comes *Freedom: First Resistance*, a game based on a book by Anne McCaffrey. It's *V* all over again, as an alien race has colonised the Earth. You play Angel, the leader of a hard-nosed band of rebels attempting to overthrow the pesky off-worlders. The game is played in third person, and involves lots of stealthy knocking off of the enemy and tricky puzzle-solving. The graphics are pretty tasty, too, and mainly show Angel and her crew skulking about dank dungeons wearing combats.

www.redstorm.com/freedom ★★★★★ *A well-presented site with a lively chat room and the option to read about the game's development from conception to release.*

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

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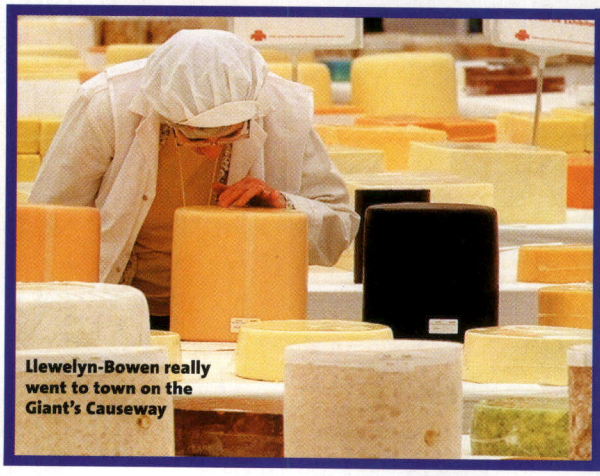
dotmusic
what's your sound?

15 FRI Night games

Olympics, 15 Sept- 1 Oct

In the words of one of our lesser-known sportsmen in those Rover ads, 'it might be on a bit late'. In which case, don't let the biggest sports event on the planet disrupt your sleep patterns, just follow it on the Net instead. Find out where in our definitive Olympian guide on page 36. ***www.olympics.com***

The camp Vikings' sail designs scared nobody



Llewelyn-Bowen really went to town on the Giant's Causeway

30 SAT The big cheese

British Cheese Awards, Stow-on-the-Wold, 30 Sept

If you're big on cheese – or even big *in* cheese – this is probably already in your diary. Over 6000 cheese lovers and, more importantly, 600 cheeses will be descending on Stow-on-the-Wold in the Cotswolds for the British Cheese Awards. The cheeses are actually judged the day before and, for the first time, the public are admitted to this hallowed event to view the Supreme champion of cheeses. There are also workshops and demos happening all over the village – and even cheese-rolling. ***www.thecheeseweb.co.uk***

SEPTEMBER 6 – OCTOBER 5

SEPT 6 WEDNESDAY 1966 *Star Trek* begins on NBCTV ***www.startrek.com*** Tim Henman, 26 ***www.henmagic.freeserve.co.uk***

7 THURS 1992 Classic FM launched ***www.classicfm.com*** Brazil gains independence in 1822. ***www.brazilbrazil.com***

8 FRI Patsy Cline born, 1932 ***www.patsy.nu*** Harry Secombe, 79 ***www.goonshow.org.uk***

9 SAT Mao Tse-tung dies in 1976 ***www.ex.ac.uk/Projects /meia/Mao*** Hugh Grant, 40 ***members.tripod.com/~kixxxxx***

10 SUN Cambridge International Festival of Arts begins ***www.theolarts.org*** BT Global Challenge yacht race gets underway ***www.btchallenge.com***

16 SAT Southampton International Boat Show ***www.boaters guide.com/shoint.htm*** BB King, 75 ***www.jazz andbluesmasters.com***

17 SUN Desmond Lynam, 58 ***www.football365.co.uk/motd/home.htm*** Damon Hill, 40 ***www.damonhill.co.uk***

18 MON Dance Umbrella festival opens ***www.dance umbrella. co.uk*** Darren Gough, 30 ***www.darrengoughdirect.com***

19 TUES Kate Adie, 55 ***news.bbc.co.uk*** David Seaman, 37 ***www.arsenal.com***

18th Rear of the Year ***web.ukonline.co.uk/quasi89/contents.html*** Sophia Loren, 66 ***www.spyders empire.com/sophia***

26 TUES Olivia Newton John, 52 ***www.onlyolivia.com*** Ian Chappell, 57 ***www.cricinfo.com***

27 WED Horse of the Year Show ***www.equestrian.co.uk /showjumping/HOYS*** Meatloaf, 53 ***www.meatloaf-oifc.com***

28 THURS Gwyneth Paltrow, 28 ***www.gwyneth paltrow.org*** Jerry Lee Lewis, 65 ***www.jllewis.com***

29 FRI Football Memorabilia Auction at Christie's, South Kensington ***www.fa-carling.com*** Bill Shankly dies in 1981 ***www.shankly.com***

30 SAT Jewish New Year 5761 ***www.totallyjewish.com*** Radio 1 launched in 1967 ***www.bbc.co.uk/radio1***

WORDS: MARK SEYMOUR, SUE WEEKES; PICTURES: EMPICS, PA

9 SAT Singalonga Fat Les?

Last Night of the Proms, Albert Hall, 9 Sept

The usual display of jingoism and national pride, presided over by a roomful of rowdy and bellicose patriots. No, not an England game, but Last Night at the Proms. The traditional Albert Hall experience will feature the usual classics, and there'll be a performance of Sir Henry Wood's *Fantasia on British Sea-Songs*. Maybe Fat Les will drop by for the finale. ***www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/proms***

There was always a celebration when the 18:23 pulled out on time

11 MON Susan Hiller's talks at the Tate ***www.tate.org.uk***

Franz Beckenbauer, 55 ***www.int-foot-fame.com/hof/beckenbauer.asp***

12 TUES Jesse Owens, born 1913 ***www.cmgww.com/sports/owens***

Barry White, 56 ***www.barrywhitemusic.com***

13 WED Building of Hadrian's Wall begins in 122AD ***www.hadrians-wall.co.uk***

First TV broadcast of Last Night of the Proms in 1947 ***www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/proms***

14 THURS Pet Survivor of the Year 2000 ***www.guides.org.uk/news/pets.html***

George Best makes debut for Manchester United in 1963 ***www.compusmart.ab.ca/icorry***

15 FRI Agatha Christie born, 1890 ***christie.mysterynet.com***

Graham Taylor, 56 ***www.watfordfc.co.uk***

21 THURS LIVE 2000 begins ***www.live2000.com***

Liam Gallagher, 28 ***www.angelfire.com/ok/girlinblack***

22 FRI Cuban Missile Crisis began in 1962 ***www.hfni.gsehd.gwu.edu/***

23 SAT Disney Kids' Awards ***disney.go.com/DisneyChannel***

Bruce Springsteen, 51 ***www.brucespringsteen.net***

24 SUN World DMC Championships in turntablism ***www.dmcworld.com***

Muppets creator Jim Henson born, 1936 ***www.muppetcentral.com***

25 MON Catherine Zeta Jones, 31 ***web.ukonline.co.uk/jones.jsrpages/zfcjx.htm***

Will Smith, 31 ***www.willsmith.com***

OCT 1 SUNDAY Start of Breast Cancer Awareness Month ***breast.cancer.com***

Keith Duffy, 26 ***www.boyzone.co.uk***

2 MON Sting, 55 ***www.stingchronicity.co.uk***

Jana Novotna, 32 ***www.skidmore.edu/~nmatos/novotna.html***

3 TUES 1952 Britain explodes atom bomb ***www.pro.gov.uk/imagelibrary/catalogue/historic.htm***

Iraq gains Independence in 1932 ***www.arab.net***

4 WED 1957 Sputnik satellite launches ***www.windows.umich.edu/cgi-bin/tour_def/space_missions/sputnik.html***

Alicia Silverstone, 24 ***come.to/alicia_sylverstone***

5 THURS 1969 *Monty Python's Flying Circus* begins ***www.pythonline.com***

Bob Geldof, 49 ***www.bobgeldof.com***

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www.tashtastic.moonfruit.com

Send your letters to: Inbox, *the net*, 38-42 Hampton Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0JE or email us at ***inbox@thenetnow.co.uk***

Dear thenet,

I preregistered with AltaVista when it announced it was going to offer completely free Internet access. I was quite excited by the idea at the time but let's just say it's a good job I didn't hold my breath. I appreciate that AltaVista's offer may have had a lot of people interested but, after waiting for months for the service to launch, I didn't hear anything until the other day. I received a letter from the company apologising for any delay in contacting me, and advising me that there are other offers on the table I may be interested in. Are they trying to fob me off or am I just being cynical?

Robert Middlemiss
Harlow

It seems you are not alone, Robert. Several newspapers and Web sites are trying to discover if anyone is actually using the AltaVista service. As we went to press, we couldn't trace anyone who was online with AltaVista, despite the fact that it claims the service went live on 30 June. We're currently trying to contact the company and, as soon as we have any news, it will be published on our Web site. Check ***www.thenetnow.co.uk*** *for updates.*

READER'S LETTER OF THE MONTH

Dear thenet,

I read on your Web site about the *Big Brother* spoof site where you key in selection of your friends names, along with a few other details and it creates your very own *Big Brother* storyline (***www.dc8p.com/bigbrother.html***). Admittedly I was a bit worried to find out my girlfriend is actually a lesbian but there we go :-).

Anyway I just wondered if you'd seen the Jerry Springer storyline generator. This works on the same sort of basis where you input details of people you know etc and it creates an episode of Springer's show containing all your mates. It's great fun and you can try it for yourself at ***http://members.xoom.com/_XMCM/insaneshrine/Springer.html***

Tom Whitchurch
Leicester

Thanks a lot for the tip-off Tom. We had great fun playing with the site although when we put in the names of a few people from the office it was all becoming a bit incestuous. If anyone else has a tip-off for a funny or amusing site, email us at ***thenetnow@haynet.com.***

Springer: formulaic

Dear thenet,

I read with interest your round-up of the latest MP3 players on the market. I've been thinking of getting one for a while and you helped me make my mind up. The thing is I'm a bit confused about what the situation is with regard to copyright. I read all sorts of things about the Napster case but can you just answer me this one question – if I download an MP3 from the Internet am I breaking the law?

Paul Baker
Newcastle

Not necessarily. There are two kinds of MP3 files – those that are distributed with the permission of the artist, such as you'd find on a site like Peoplesound or on band's official sites. Then there's illegal MP3s which people copy from CDs and post on their personal sites. The problem with Napster is that it doesn't know which is which so it's being accused of effectively trafficking in stolen goods.

MAIL MONKEY Lets it all hang out

From: mailmonkey@chimp.co.uk
Sent: Wednesday August 16, 2000
To: roy.keane@manutd.com
Subject: That's not what I call charity

Dear Roy,

It didn't take you much time to get back into the swing of the football season did it? I haven't seen tackle like that since Linford Christie retired from athletics and stopped wearing that Lycra stuff .

I've had the odd run-in with the footballing authorities myself, of course. I once got sent off playing for the Primates XI. We were playing against a female celebrity team and I forgot that you weren't allowed to tackle from behind if you know what I mean. Must be the only person ever to get sent off after slipping behind the defence and scoring.

I couldn't make the Charity Shield. The last time I was at Wembley Michael Jackson was playing there and I took violent exception to the proposals made by his chimp, Bubbles. I'm a liberal kinda monkey, but a happily married heterosexual one, you know.

Anyway they've not let me back in since but I watched the game on TV and I wasn't impressed. I know Beckham always does everything his missus tells him to but she should let him know that Out Of My Mind is just the name of her song and he doesn't have to play like that. It obviously affected you a fair bit as well. I'm sure there was a VPL (Visible Panty Line) going on with young David as well. He's been wearing her knickers again, hasn't he? I'm not convinced about your new keeper, Fabien Barthez, either. If Fergie had asked me I could have pointed him in the direction of my wife, because when she puts her mind to it she certainly stops me scoring.

Anyway, enjoy your three match enforced break. I was thinking of asking you to be a guest bouncer at my new club, but although some of the girls in there are X-rated, I could do without the doormen's behaviour being the same.

Yours kicking the ball not the man,

Mail monkey

www.manutd.com

beckhamania.com

members.tripod.com/~spicefreak7

www.mjnet.com

Dear thenet,

Hi. In your Retail Therapy feature (June 2000) you pictured a Freebord. I have discovered that a Freebord looks very different to the one shown, as I'm sure many have mailed you. *But*...exactly what was pictured? I would be very grateful if you could let me know.

Kato
Via email

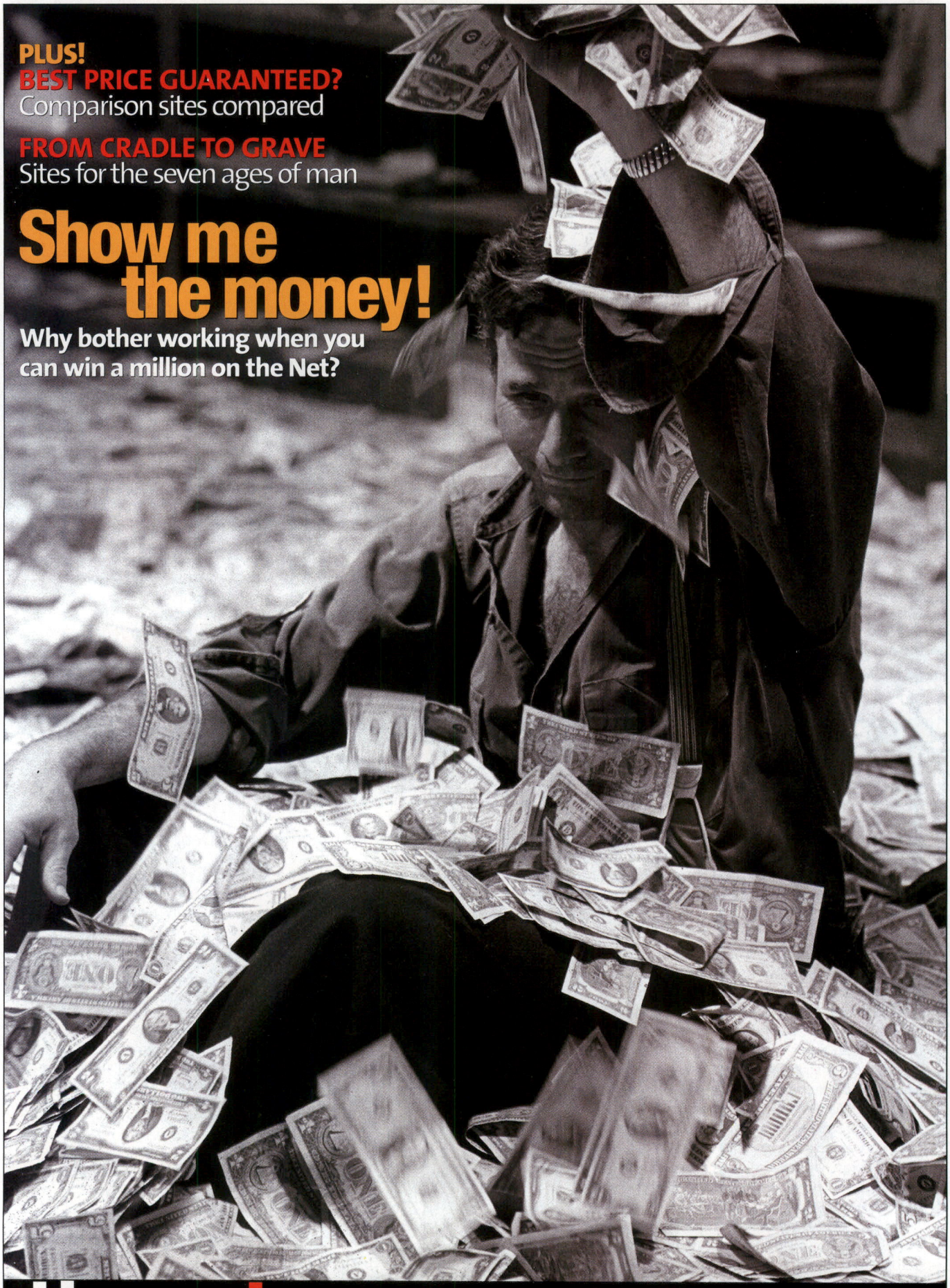
Sorry for the confusion. Our picture was of an NZ board which is no longer available from Boardriders. However, it has plenty of other freebords and anyone wanting to find out more can go to the US site at ***www.freebord.com****, which links back to* ***www.boardriders.co.uk*** *where you can buy one.*

EVERYONE'S A WINNER

PC WORLD THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE

Each letter published wins a PC World Healthcheck – the MOT service for your PC. It includes diagnostic and anti-virus checks, plus a complete valet inside and out, worth £39.99.

PICTURE: PA



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Comparison sites compared

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Sites for the seven ages of man

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PICTURES: KOBAL COLLECTION

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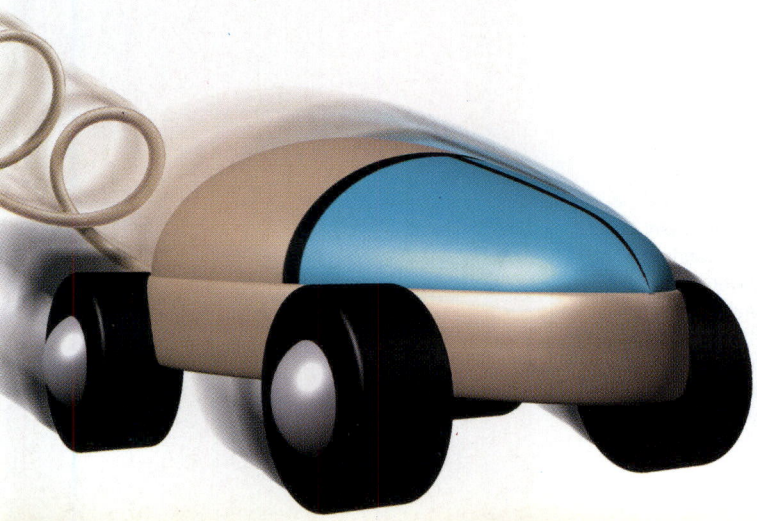
www.allcars.com



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OH, DANNY BOY... THE NET IS CALLIN'

No15 365 CORPORATION

When you've edited or launched magazines like *Q* and *Total Sport*, created a football radio show with Danny Baker and presented your own television programme (*Under the Moon*), where does the next challenge lie? If you're Danny Kelly, director of the 365 Corporation, you launch a site called Football365 and then create a range of sites with the 365 branding. Unsurprisingly, he's making a success of that as well.

When did you first have the idea for Football365, and how long did it take to come to fruition?

About three years ago now, Simon Morris, who has a background in marketing, Dan Thompson, from the business world, and myself, from publishing, got together to discuss this great new distribution method which is the Internet. We wanted to do something on the Net, and we did football first because we're all fans and it was World Cup year in 1998. It took us six months from meeting for the first time to getting something up on the Web. Along the way we made every mistake in the book, but that's allowable as long as you learn from them.

'Football365 works because it genuinely cares what the users think'

The Internet is a tremendously competitive market place and there's a host of other football sites – why is 365 better?

It's successful because it has an edge to it. There are two worlds: the one the football authorities want you to believe and the experience of the actual fans. In between those two there's scope for good journalism and to have fun. Football365 works because it tells things entertainingly; it tries to dig up things other people don't have; and it genuinely, *genuinely* cares what the users think.

We're the one that leads in the slightly irreverent attitude, but that's still based on having all the news and results as they happen.

Can so many sites all survive on the Net?

One of our rivals sent round an .exe file of someone pissing all over the 365 logo when it launched; they'll soon be drinking that piss because they've done nothing and will go out of business. I didn't respond, nor shall I until the ongrave dancing begins. There will be a shake-out, but for that glorious time until the big corporations completely dominate the Net – which they will to some extent – you can launch great products and be successful if your model is right.

Building on the success of Football365, you've since launched several spin-offs. How did that evolve?

It was always the plan to make more sites – we just needed the time, money, inspiration and success. Now we have about 40 sites worldwide – covering sports, entertainment and lifestyle. We try to make sites that are directly aimed at the user – they don't care about how it got there, they just want to know what's in it for them.

You've had great success across the traditional media – what new challenges did you face moving into the online world?

What you do on magazines and television is broadcasting. What you are doing on the Internet is truly closer to genuine communication; it's not the broadcaster that's important, but the person receiving the information. When you're broadcasting, there is no reception of the noise you're giving out. I had to learn to make products that not only satisfy the consumer, but allow them to be part of it – it's like suddenly having two million editors. In the past, I would broadcast to them and they took it in. Now, we broadcast and they're in touch with each other. It's a different kind of world. You aren't filling them full of information, but triggering them into discussion – it brings the flavour of the conversations that football fans, music fans – or whatever – are having in a way that Trevor Brooking and Alan Hansen – with all due respect – could never ever do.

You're obviously a great fan of the Web. What's the best thing about it?

The single best thing about the Internet is its ability to take people who are geographically disparate, but emotionally similar, and put them in direct contact with each other. For every Football365, there's a site that concentrates on one strange thing that one or two people are interested in – and they're happy for a couple of hundred people to join them in their passion. The ability for people to propagate their perfectly wonderful, mad visions of the world, their interests and hobbies or pictures of their families is truly marvellous.

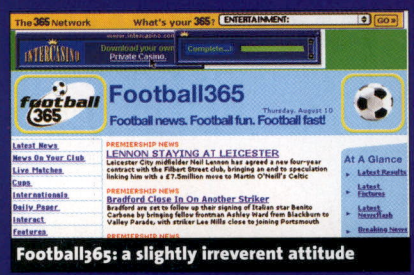
It's one thing being successful, but it's another to remain so – what does the future hold for 365?

We set out to make this a global giant in the communications/information/entertainment industry, and we're a tiny way down the path with that. We set out to make this company special – special for those of us who work in it, for our consumers and our rivals. We want our rivals to 'look at that bloody thing', and we want to remain special to everyone who observes us.

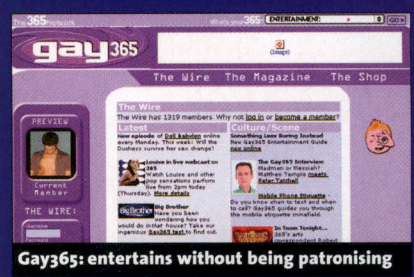
The Internet is simply another means of delivery, like the paperboy or the petrol pump. I want this company to relate to the world, not to the Internet, and I want this company to dominate the world – not the Internet.

WORDS: PAUL WINSLOW; PHOTOGRAPHY: GUY JORDAN

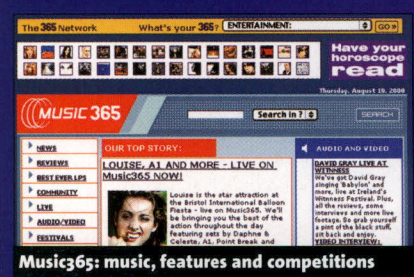
365.COM *Surfing refreshment*



Football365: a slightly irreverent attitude



Gay365: entertains without being patronising



Music365: music, features and competitions

WHAT IS IT? Content provider with a range of Web sites covering a variety of sport, entertainment and lifestyle subjects.
LAUNCHED Football365 emails started February 1998; the site launched April 1998.
TRAFFIC 1.81m unique users.
BASE Gloucester Place, London.
KEY FEATURES Football365, Music365, Rugby365, Gay365 and a number of other sites offering news and features.

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MY FAVOURITE GAME

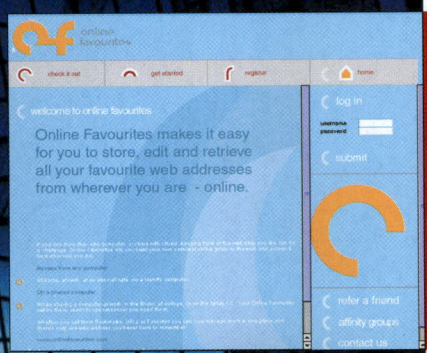
Take your bookmarks with you – wherever you surf

ONLINE FAVOURITES

www.onlinefavourites.com

If necessity is the mother of invention, then clear thinking is the father – and conception often occurs in the wee small hours. So it was with Tim Ellis, who came up with Online Favourites.

'Like everybody else, I'd been racking my brains for an Internet brainwave,' admits Tim. 'I've got a day job – I run an IT recruitment company – and kids, so I wasn't in a position to jack everything in and start an Amazon. I needed an idea that didn't require a huge supply chain before it was viable.'



Tim knew that an online bookmark system should be accessible anywhere

Inspiration struck as Tim surfed. 'I was working late in the office one night and wanted to continue browsing at home,' he remembers. 'I started to copy my favourites onto a floppy, and I soon got fed up. I thought there must be a better solution.'

Tim realised that an online bookmark system would be accessible from anywhere, and Online Favourites was born. He roped in long-term associate Mike RiedlShah ('an Australian-German raised in New Zealand') as technical architect, to turn the idea into living, breathing Java. Not that it was a straightforward task; Online Favourites had trouble attracting attention in a market flooded with silver-spoon start-ups.

'There's so much money being thrown at the Internet that it's difficult for a relatively small player to get the airspace,' bemoans Tim. 'It was hard to find a development company prepared to take on a project which, for most of them, was quite a small piece of work. They back-pedalled when they discovered we weren't throwing millions at e-commerce.'

At least not throwing money at Online Favourites means it will have time to grow at its own speed; as Tim points out, 'We don't need to start generating revenue for a while because there's no supply chain. Besides, flickering banner ads have such a low hit rate that there's really no point annoying people.'

Plans are afoot to capitalise on the bookmark database: 'We're collating sites which are similar and we're thinking of affiliate marketing to people interested in those groups.' But isn't Tim worried that target marketing will make users suspicious about their privacy? 'We can't tell who people are, just what they're into. The information isn't specific enough to say "Mrs Smith in Dorking is looking at a few dubious sites".'

The natural human habit of stockpiling means Online Favourites is onto a winner. 'People hoard stuff they find on the Web; I've got tons of bookmarks that I very rarely look at, but I might need in the future.' And Tim's not on his own: 'Some people have uploaded 3,000 bookmarks.' Try writing all those down on the back of an envelope before catching the train home!

KEEP IT SIMPLE, STUPID!

Meet Richard Porter – *Big Issue* seller-turned-entrepreneur

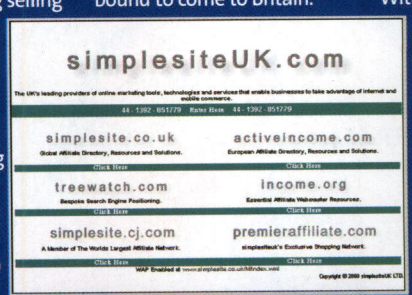
SIMPLESITE

www.simplesiteuk.com

Richard Porter believes his company will be worth millions, yet two years ago he was making a living selling *The Big Issue* after coming back from a European trek.

He ended up in Devon, where he met a man wanting to put companies online. Richard had another 'client' – a guy who ran a Web development company – and suggested the two of them get together. 'The resulting deal was worth thousands, and all I got was 80p for the mag,' he reflects. 'I thought, "I want more than that".'

Richard began looking for opportunities on the Net. He reckoned that the biggest thing in America – affiliate marketing – was bound to come to Britain.



Say you're a Webmaster running a football site; to join an affiliate scheme, you'd pick a subject that complements your site – a sports merchandise store, for example. You'd then run free ads for that site and, when someone clicked on one and made a purchase, you'd make a profit.

With his business partner, Steven Dotsch, Richard set up a joint venture with Commission Junction. Simplesite has since signed 220,000 sites, who choose from 900 merchants in 170 categories. He charges merchants to join and ensures sites get paid for their referrals.

'Affiliate marketing is the most cost-effective means of marketing on the Web,' Richard explains. 'It's going to be huge here, I know it.'

WORDS: GARY PARKINSON (ONLINE FAVES), SEAN HARGRAVE (SIMPLESITE); PICTURE: STEVE ORINO

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www.carphonewarehouse.co.uk

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www.networkextra.net

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www.networkextra.net

MOTOROLA TALKABOUT T2288 (WAP) £69.99 *www.motorola.co.uk*

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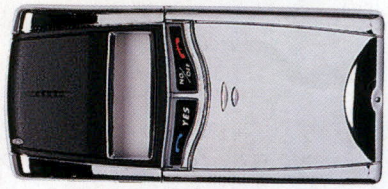
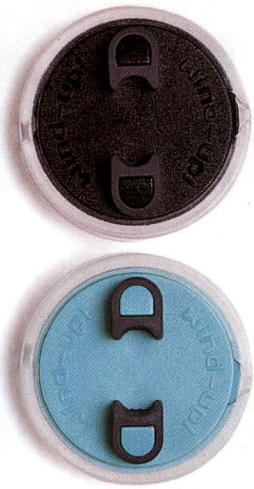


SIEMENS C35i (WAP) £19.99 (contract); £99.99 (pre-paid) *www.siemens.co.uk*

MOBILE PHONE CHAIR £3.99 (sale price) *www.inhabit.co.uk*



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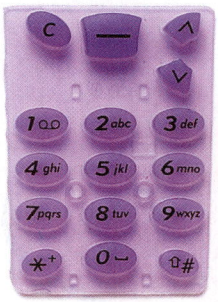

KEY PAD £5.99
www.beyond-2000.co.uk

NOKIA 8210 £229 (subject to contracts) *www.nokia.com*

GNOOMY £4.99
www.toyzone.co.uk

FACSIAS £14.99
www.directphones.co.uk

UPWARDLY MOBILE

About to upgrade your phone? Do it online, then buy all the accessories you'll ever need

Was there ever a more confusing purchase to be made than a mobile phone? OK, maybe choosing an ISP, but at least the majority of those are free now.

As well as all the confusing tariffs and pay-as-you go options, there are a mass of style, size and fascia decisions to make, not to mention whether you should wap or not – see page 44. Our research proved that the Internet won't totally demystify the whole business, but most sites genuinely try to make it less confusing. And at least you haven't got to deal with an intimidating sales assistant who can't remember when he last used a land line.

The prices quoted for the phones featured here are 'average' and very much subject to contracts and tariffs – you will undoubtedly come across variations.

Once you've got a phone and various extras, all you need is an annoying ringtone

And once you've got your phone and its extras, all you need is an annoying ringtone. Try *www.ringtones.co.uk*, where you can choose from *The Archers* theme to *Zorba the Greek*, and most points in between.

HOW THE SITES COMPARE

BEYOND 2000 *www.beyond-2000.co.uk*
A large range of accessories and impressive fulfilment, as most of the products are already in stock. ★★★★

CARPHONE WAREHOUSE *www.carphonewarehouse.co.uk*
What you'd expect from the high street giant. Check out the deal of the day – a pay-as-you go Sagem for £25.99 when we dropped by. ★★★★

DIAL AWAY *www.dial-away.co.uk*
If you have to call the UK when you're abroad, a Dial Away phone could be a cheap way of doing it – calls from 33p a minute on weekdays. ★★★

DIRECT PHONES *www.directphones.co.uk*
Well-designed site with a good guide to tariffs. Genuinely tries to make the business of buying a mobile phone much easier. ★★★★

MOBILES ONLINE *www.mobiles.co.uk*
Claims to be the longest-established mobile phone shop on the Net. It's an Orange approved dealer and a Club Nokia Service Centre. ★★★★

NETWORK EXTRA *www.networkextra.net*
Sells the more 'esoteric' phone accessories that you can't buy anywhere else. The e-commerce site goes live in mid-September. ★★★★

ORANGE *www.orange.co.uk*
All the TalkPlan variations explained, plus Just Talk and Everyday 50. Buy online here and existing customers can upgrade their handsets. ★★★★

ONE2ONE *www.www1.one2one.co.uk*
The myriad of One2One permutations are available to buy online – just you worry about who you want to have a One2One with. ★★★

TOY ZONE *www.toyzone.co.uk*
Stockist of the Gnoomies, the creatures who come with a quartz crystal and sit on your phone as an alternative to an antenna shield. ★★★

VIRGIN *www.virginmobile.com/mobile*
Buy a mobile phone from the site and get free insurance for a year. There's only one tariff, so you can concentrate on your model of phone. ★★★★

WORDS: SUE WEEKES; PICTURES: NICK WRIGHT, CHANNEL 4

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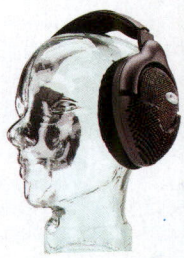

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736 2000 www.live2000.com

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

The Olympics might be taking place on the other side of the world, but thanks to the Net it'll seem like you're right in the thick of the action!

Here's a quick test to find out if you're an Australian. Can you remember what you were doing on 23 September 1993 – or failing that, do you have any embarrassing photographs or friends to remind you? If the answer is 'yes' and you were out partying, shouting 'you beaut' and extolling the virtues of Matilda's waltzing prowess, chances are you were Down Under – and had just heard the news that the 27th Olympiad had been awarded to Sydney.

Seven years later, the games get under way on 15 September and will end on 1 October. In that time an extra 1.3m people will have swooped on the city to watch the world's best athletes compete for the 180 elusive gold medals to be handed out over the course of the fortnight.

Unlike the original Olympics, where the results were only as fast as the scribe was at painting a photo finish on a dinner service, the Internet means that anyone, anywhere in the world can prepare for the Games, then follow every event with up-to-the second results at the click of a mouse. So here are the sites that'll make you feel as if you're under starter's orders yourself – only without the worry of being one piss in a bottle away from being sent home in disgrace...

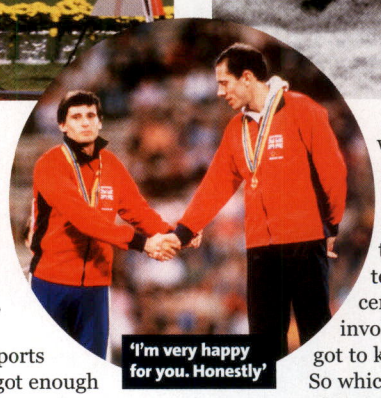
WORDS: SEAN HARGREAVE; PICTURES: STEVE ORINO, EMPICS, PA, LIAISON

THE EARLY DAYS

The Olympic Games can be traced back to 824BC, when King Iphitos of Elis thought it would be a good idea for everyone in Greece to put their weapons down and compete against one another on the field, throwing javelins into the turf instead of into one another. To read a brief, yet fully formed version of events, the history section of the Australian Olympic Committee's site is very good – ***www.aoc.com/au/games***.

For a far more thorough analysis, going right through to the modern day, try ***www.aafla.org*** and select the 'Olympic Information Center' link, which has all the history you could ever want in its Olympic Primer section. It traces the history of the Games from the earliest beginnings up to their suspension in 394AD, adding useful titbits such as how the ladies weren't allowed to compete or even turn up to watch – 'on pain of death'. The High Priestess of the Goddess Demeter was the only woman

The 100m skipping was a joy to behold


'I'm very happy for you. Honestly'

allowed in to the Games – to admire the athletes' lovely legs.

The story then suddenly jumps to Victorian times and to a certain Pierre de Fredy, Baron of Coubertin, the father of the modern Olympics. Always a keen sports fan, the French aristocrat got enough countries to agree to compete against one another to set up the first modern-day Olympic games in Athens in 1896. He sold it to the nations much along the same lines as King Iphitos did: that if countries could measure how fast they could run or chuck heavy and pointed objects, they might spend less time drawing up invasion plans. Unlucky, Pierre.

It was Coubertin who used the Latin phrase of 'Citius, Altius, Fortius' (faster, higher, stronger) and made it the Games' motto. In 1913 he also invented the entwined blue, black, red, yellow and green rings as the Olympic symbol, chosen to represent the five continents.

The next major step for the Olympics was to bring back the flame the Greeks used to keep burning throughout the Games at a temple in honour of Zeus. The IOC section of the official site, ***www.olympic.org***, has a small section of facts outlining the history of flame, which made its first appearance during the opening ceremony in Amsterdam, 1928. The first torch relay, it continues to tell us, was initiated by a certain Mr Hitler in 1936 and involved 3,000 runners (each got to keep their own torch).

So which are going to be the best sites to surf during the Sydney Games? Official sites for sporting events have improved remarkably over the last couple of years. Thanks to huge sponsorship deals (in this case IBM), they're no longer the fruits of what a marketing executive with a FrontPage manual can come up with over a weekend.

In fact, ***www.olympics.com*** is everything it should be – a one-stop, entertaining and informative site that leaves the visitor with no unanswered questions about the Games. The first hint of thoughtfulness from the creators is a 'time and weather in Sydney' display on the page – useful for getting an idea of the conditions athletes are competing in. The site is expecting 1.4 billion page impressions – and in doing so will notch up a record itself for the most amount of hits in the shortest time.

In 394AD ladies couldn't even watch – 'on pain of death'

The human-masked Polaris missiles were realistic

And talking of competitors, there is a huge archive of 'Athlete of the Day' features, taking in all sports from archery to judo and beyond; a pull-down menu lets you select a sport and its top competitors. And if you want to get a hook on what a particular event is all about, there are guides to every sport – pointing out to visitors, for example, that female fencers do not compete with a sabre, unlike the men. Rules to each sport, its history and who's qualified for the 2000 Games are also included.

Usefully, there is also a run-down of which events are happening where, complete with pages devoted to each venue – some of which (including the Dune Gray Velodrome)

A drunken OJ ruined the sandcastle competition

feature an iPIX panoramic picture, enabling you to pan and scan around the arena as if you were there. And if all this really gets you interested, there's also a secure server from which to buy tickets.

This is in stark contrast to the other official site prepared by the International Olympic Committee – ***www.olympic.org*** (***ioc.org*** belongs to some bunch of American bible-bashers!). Its main attraction is a list of features and latest news about the 2000 Games, although these come from around the world and half will be of no use unless you speak at least one foreign language. It *is* useful for information on where the Olympic torch has been – this year's 27,000km trek with 11,000 bearers makes it the longest in history – but apart from that the best advice is to go '.com' instead of '.org'.

As for the various venues being used for this year's Games, stick to the previously mentioned official ***www.olympics.com*** site. However, if you want to take a look at some panoramic images of the venues, check out ***www.4020.net/vrsyd***. Here there are a couple of dozen pictures of venues that only take a moment to download and which can be panned left and right. The swimming and stadia shots are the best.

And if you get so into the Games that you want to buy an aerial shot of the Olympic Village, put in an order at ***www.skycam.com.au***

WHEN SPORTSWOMEN ATTACK

If you can't win by fair means, then foul is always worth giving a go

There was always someone who had a lump of sellotape on them for the egg and spoon race at school. Well, those same people are still around – only some of them have got rather better at bucking the system and may actually make it on the plane to Sydney.

If you want to get up to speed with the latest tests and drug probes on top athletes, there are two very comprehensive sites provided by Yahoo! and the BBC at ***in.fullcoverage.yahoo.com/fc/India/Drugs_in_Sports/news_stories_1.html*** and ***news.bbc.co.uk/sport/hi/english/in_depth/2000/drugs_in_sport/default.stm***. The sites are packed with the latest news on past and present cheats, as well as the latest test for erythropoietin (EPO). This hormone, developed in the '80s to treat kidney patients, is the latest drug used by athletes to boost performance. Scientists believe its ability to encourage red blood cells, rich in oxygen, can boost energy levels by up to 15 percent.

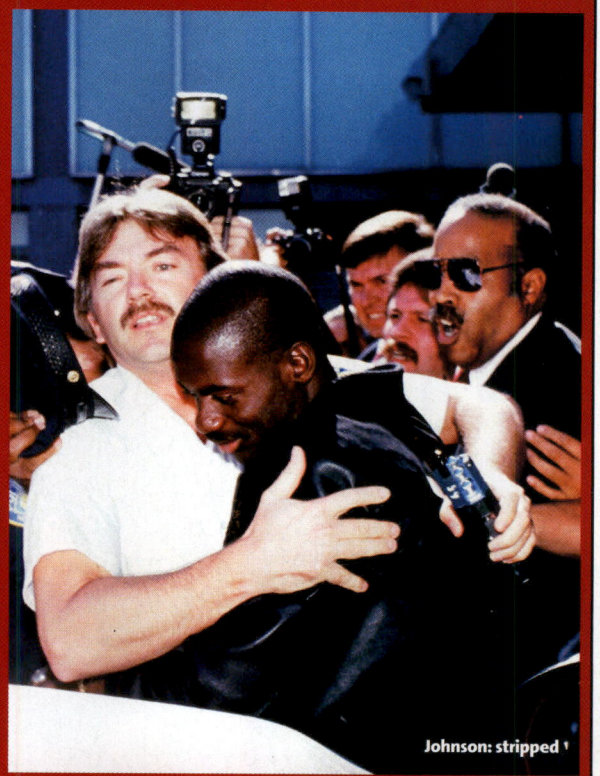
If you want to swot up on the governing bodies' research on drugs to place the current scare in perspective, check out the history of drug-taking in sport at ***www.sportrec.qld.gov.au/infopaper/drugsinf.html***. Alternatively, a useful page with a dozen or so links to top scientific articles (written in a language that everyone can understand) at ***www.science.org.au/nova/055/055sit.htm***.

However, it's a sobering reminder to realise that, although Ben Johnson was stripped of his 100m gold medal at the Olympics in Seoul, 1988, for failing a drug test, half of the field in that race have since been involved in drug scares.

Queen of the Olympics bad girls must be US skater Tonya Harding, who paid to have rival Nancy Kerrigan kneecapped in 1994 by a bloke who looks just like Dennis Franz in *NYPD Blue*. Study the extensive archives at ***washingtonpost.com***.

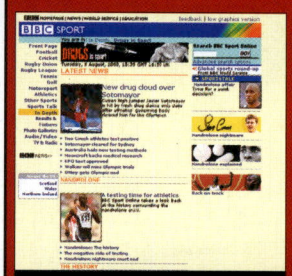
But it's drugs that are the biggest threat to sport. Good old nandroline – the natural hormone athletes can take to build muscle bulk – is sure to still be around (and pumping round a few competitors' veins).

Remember the Tour de France a couple of years ago when the French police raided the team hotels? If the new tests are in place, exactly the same scenario could unfold in Sydney. That is, if the authorities have the guts to open Pandora's box...



Johnson: stripped

Good old nandroline is sure to still be around (and in a few veins)



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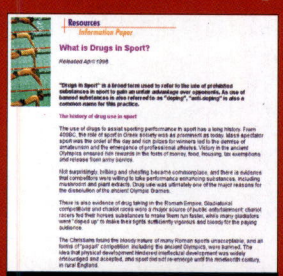
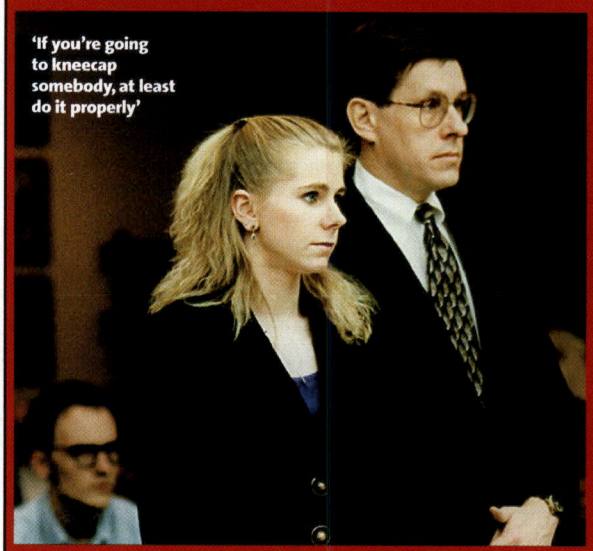


Drugs, history of at sportrec.qld



'If you're going to kneecap somebody, at least do it properly'

Nimble Daley dodged the anorexic elephant's attack

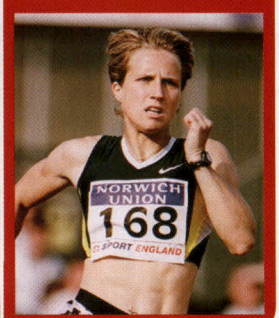
BRITAIN'S HOPEFULS

KATHARINE MERRY

The former junior champ might have her eye on gold for the 400m, but when it comes to a fight she's only runner-up...

You used to share a house with triple-jump champ Ashia Hansen. Who won control of things like the computer and the hi-fi?
We both owned our own computers, and we had a few TVs in the house – I had one in my room, so when my soap operas were on I could hide away and watch them. But if it had come to a scrap, I would gladly let Ashia have control – she's stronger than me!

You've appeared in *Cosmo* and *Marie Claire*. Do you strategically leave copies 'lying around'?
If my friends saw a copy, they'd open it and loudly share it with the whole world. Very embarrassing – I'm more likely to turn the mags over and hide them than to highlight my article! Unless the picture made me look stunning and beautiful, of course...



– although expect to pay upwards of A$50 for the privilege of a single 10x8 print delivered to your door.

TEAMS & THEIR SPORTS

These sites are among the worst you could imagine

The sites behind each country's team and the various sports are, it has to be said, among the worst you could imagine – with America (***www.usoc.org*** or ***www.usatf.org***) and Australia (***www.australian.olympic.org.au*** or ***atheletics.org.au***) the rare exceptions. Most feature hardly any information about competitors, events or the country's record in the Olympics. While the Chinese site (***www.chinaolympics.com***) plays a catchy tune and reminds us they won 16 golds in 1996, it has not been updated since.

The Russian site, ***www.roc.ru***, is exactly how you'd imagine it – it lists a bunch of officials and little else. A good starting point, if you really have to find out the best ping-pong player Lithuania has to offer, is ***www.olympic.org/ioc/e/org/noc/noc_list_e.html***, which has links to every country's organisation.

Great Britain's site, ***www.olympics.org.uk***, tries fairly hard to give a run-down of what we can expect. There is a good description of all the Olympic events, complete with rules, but there is no feeling that we are being introduced to the British team, or at the very least our main hopefuls. The only good part is a list of medal winners which, given our prowess, can't have taken much longer than a lunch hour to complete – we only won a single gold in 1996, in the rowing coxless pairs, courtesy of Redgrave and Pinsent.

If you have a craving for statistics but find the various Olympic Committee sites let you down, try each sport's national governing body. A list can be found at ***www.olympic.org/ioc/e/if/list_all_e.html***.

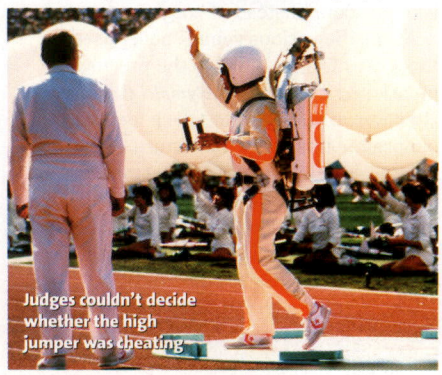
Another good place to look is ***www.about.com***; under its sports section is a tonne of sites, ranging from those for the glam events (***www.trackandfield.about.com*** and ***gymnastics.about.com***) to the rather plainer ones (***tabletennis.about.com*** and ***amateurwrestle.about.com***).

Unless you really do want to dig very deep, it is probably best to stick with the general sports sites' listings of the names to watch in each event. Unfortunately, most of these sites are as dull as ditchwater. Look at ***www.britishfencing.com*** for its one page of Olympic previews, if you don't believe us.

If you're looking to follow Redgrave and Pinsent this time around, ***www.rowingnews.com*** is similarly under-designed and lacking in any flair, as is ***www.sailing.org*** – although both are written by experts.

So which competitors are going to make the Sydney Games come alive? The best places to check out previews (as well as up-to-the-second results) belong to the broadcast companies. CNN has teamed up with *Sports Illustrated* to build a really good-looking and informative site at ***www.sportsillustrated.cnn.com/Olympics***. To get a flavour of the various events and the hotly-tipped competitors, it's without parallel.

Similarly the excellent ***www.nbcolympics.com***



Judges couldn't decide whether the high jumper was cheating

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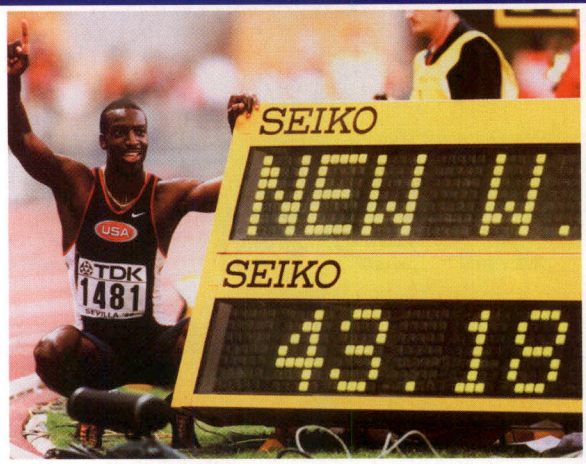
IT'S LIVE, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT

The Olympics online – cartoon action with a US bias

The big surprise for most Net fans is that nobody in the world holds live Net broadcast rights to the action. The BBC has tried to get the various rights holders around the world to agree to put some live action online, but according to Pete Weston, project manager of the revamped BBC Sport Online service, NBC was the main stumbling block.

'They're the biggest rights holder, so when they say no, that's pretty much it,' he says.

But don't panic! There is a partial solution to the problem – from NBC. It has joined up with sports site Quokka.com to develop ***www.nbcolympics.com***. This is promising to have live action, but not video – after all, that would be illegal. So instead of a constant run of pictures, a few frames from the live NBC feed are grabbed, in a 'cartoon strip' effect that resembles live video.



NBC's 'cartoon strip' effect will resemble live video of the events

'We thought it was a really good way of covering the sport live without having to worry about rights or bandwidth,' explains David Riemer, senior vice president of marketing at Quokka. 'And you get a very good idea of the action.'

The site admits that Europeans may find the coverage is biased towards the Yanks, but anyone with a Net connection can tune in.

Quokka has also signed up Michael Johnson, who recently pulled up injured in a 200m trial then later announced on the site he would not run the distance again. It is hoped he will still compete in the 400m. If so, Quokka has already put sensors on his body during a trial run – so the biometric data on his heart rate etc, can be run alongside their live coverage of him during the event.

'But,' says Riemer, 'whatever happens, he'll be providing editorial content, so we have the inside view from a top athlete.'

Joint venture between NBC and Quokka: nbcolympics.com

(see live coverage panel, above) is well worth bookmarking for its ability to take Web visitors right inside the Games, due to its excellent content.

Information is a bit thin on the ground at the moment on the BBC sports site ***www.bbc.co.uk/sport***, but the UK broadcast rights holder does have an up-to-the-second news service plus features to give some background on the events and competitors, and it's planned to have gone live by the time the games start.

As if to underline how far behind commercial sport the Olympics are, there are very few individual sites detailing the lives and great performances of the world's top stars. Poor old Michael Johnson appears to have had his name pre-registered by someone else, leaving us only with a fairly amateurish fan site at ***www.baylor.edu/~Todd_Copeland/Johnson/Johnson.html***.

However, far more professional, official pages are available for the key sprint stars ***www.donovanbailey.com*** and ***www.atoboldon.com***. The latter is perhaps a tad too flash – quite literally – but is still an entertaining read once you get past the annoying intro of someone continually saying 'Welcome'. Donovan Bailey's site is more basic, but is packed with pictures, chat and details about the Canadian star.

Talking of which, the new Canadian champion and wonder kid Bruny Surin can be found at ***www.brunysurin.infinit.net***. It's a fair site which, due to the youngster only recently coming through injury problems, does not have a wealth of info.

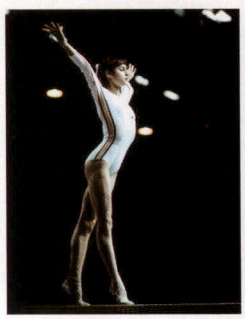
American sprinter and long-jump sensation Marion Jones has a good fan site at ***www.marionknowstrack.com***; while sprint rival Gail Devers – 'the fastest woman in the world' – even says 'Hello' to visitors at ***www.gaildevers.com***. A nice touch to a very well-produced site.

For long-distance fans there is ***www.knannouchi.com***, home to Khalid Khannouchi, the world's fastest marathon runner. Alternatively Ethiopia profiles its top athletes at ***www.ethiosports.com***.

GREAT OLYMPICS MOMENTS

While sportsmen compete every year in all kinds of World, Commonwealth and intercontinental championships, we all know that the Olympics is the big one. And where the ultimate prize is up for grabs, legends are made...

In modern history there is none more famous than Jesse Owens, the sprinter and long jumper. In Berlin 1936 he became the



Read a run-down of a dozen athletes who've created history

first person to win four Golds in one Olympics, setting Olympic records in the long jump and 200m and helping to set a world record in the 4x100m relay – all on the same day, no less. And to round it off, he won the 100m as well.

There is a great site for background on the formidable athlete who only became known as Jesse after his first day at a new school, aged eight – when asked his name the teacher misheard him saying JC Owens (for James Cleveland Owens) and wrote down Jesse instead. At ***www.cmgww.com/sports/owens*** you can read about how the black athlete likened Hitler – who refused to shake his hand and present his gold medals – as being remarkably similar to some people back home, where he could not sit at the front of a bus because of his colour.

To read a run-down of the dozen men and women who created 'great moments' in Olympic history there is also the International Amateur Athletics Federation's 'Legends' Web site – ***www.iaaf.org/athletes/legends***. While a personality like Carl Lewis will be familiar, there are fascinating profiles of many others. Czech long-distance runner Emil Zatopek is profiled for being the first runner ever to win the 5,000m, 10,000m and the marathon (he had never previously run one) at Helsinki in 1952.

Paavo Nurmi, the 'Phantom Finn', is similarly honoured for being the first athlete to win nine top medals – he won the 5,000m and 10,000m within an hour of each other at Paris in 1924. Only Carl Lewis can match his haul of gold.

Famous Americans, meanwhile, get lots of backslapping and high fives at the country's Olympic Hall of Fame at ***www.usoc.org*** or ***www.usatf.org/hof***.

A site that you would think should be good for history, but is about as interesting as watching someone rake over the long-jump pit, is ***www.museum.olympic.org***. It's the official site of the Olympic Museum, yet tells the public virtually nothing about the Games. It boasts of a virtual tour which allows a look inside a very static room or two and stills from a couple of past opening ceremonies. Boring stuff from people who should have made a greater effort.

However, there is a far more interesting run-down of Olympic legends and great moments at ***www.michtrack.org/century10.htm***. Here is a sports writer who obviously knows his stuff, giving us a top 100 great moments in athletics – most of which take place at the Olympics, although not all. They make fascinating reading for the way the author sets the background and describes the decisive moments.

However, because this is 'not a collection of great performances but a collection of great battles', the list can appear to have a strange order of importance – Jesse Owens, for example, does not even make it in to the top 40. The Number One spot goes to a race that sounds like a Disney movie. A virtually unknown Sioux Indian, Billy Mills, was not expected to win the 10,000m in Tokyo, 1964 – particularly after boxed-in favourite Ron Clarke pushed him over. Not to be outdone, Billy got back up, dusted himself off and sprinted the rest of the race to take gold and set a new Olympic record.

The nearest most Brits in their 20s and 30s will get to remembering one of the moments is at Number Six – the men's 100m in Seoul 1998. Ben Johnson (***www.benjohnson979.com***) won but was later disqualified for failing a drugs test, paving the way for Carl Lewis to win and Linford Christie to take bronze. A similar great moment was Michael Johnson sprinting to thrash the 'unbeatable' Frankie Fredericks in the men's 200m in Atlanta 1996.

And one of the all-time great performances (Number Eight in the chart) is that of discus thrower Al Oerter, who became only the second man ever to win golds in three consecutive games – despite being advised by doctors not to compete in Tokyo 1964.

Will Sydney provide equally high-calibre moments? Citius, Altius, Fortius...

BRITAIN'S HOPEFULS

JAMES CRACKNELL

Despite training hard as a member of Britain's rowing squad, James still finds time to log on to *www.coxless4.com*...

You've said you've got a love of surfing. Is that the Internet variety?
At this time yes, as we're training so much at the moment – only one day off every six weeks – that time is not on my side for the outdoor variety.

Aren't you sick of water?
No! There is nothing better than being outside in the sea in the summer. During the winter, it's a different story!

Will your geography qualification see you taking your fellow Brits on walking tours of Sydney?
No. I'm a geography graduate, so consequently I'm terrible at map-reading.

World of

Not sure what to do with your snazzy new mobile phone? Then check out these 25 ways to make your wireless life more interesting...

WORDS: MATTHEW BINGHAM, PAUL WINSLOW; ILLUSTRATIONS: PHIL DOBSON, CORBIS

1 FIND A NEW JOB

Get through another interminable meeting at work by surfing for a new job. BT Cellnet subscribers can browse the thousands of positions advertised in *The Guardian* via ***www.jobsunlimited.co.uk***, or search 90,000-plus vacancies at ***www.gisajob.com***. High-tech jobs can be found via Contract Warehouse at ***wap.cwjob.com*** and ***www.itjoblink.com/wap/wh.wml***, or create a Job Agent able to trawl through 18,000 UK vacancies at ***wap.stepstone.co.uk***. Movers and shakers can find a job worldwide at ***www.antal.com/ wap*** – but for an ultra-fast application for your dream job, send your CV via WAP. Keep vital details at ***www.activecv.com/wap***, or post an online resume at ***www.worldjobmart.com/wireless/default.asp***.

2 AVOID SHOWERS

Fed up with British summers? Search for 'gorgeous' conditions anywhere in the world at Wetter (that's German for 'weather', smart-arse): ***wap.wetteronline.de/en/i.wml***. Alternatively, check out ***wap.onlineweather.com*** for weather reports for specific British cities, read daily snow reports at the hilariously-named ***pistoff.com/wap.wml*** and check out Yahoo! forecasts at ***wapsite.de/Info/Weather/Yahoo! Weather***. Fly-boys seem particularly well catered for: find meteorological data for any airport on the planet at ***www.wapmx.com/fly.wml***, while UK aviators can circle around their own wap-tastic site at ***sunplan.com/AvWx.wml***.

3 CATCH A TRAIN

They say the only way of making sure you catch a train is to miss the one before it. But now there's another option: use the power of WAP. Register at ***www.railtrack.co.uk/wap*** and do all that tedious setting-up of most-used stations and travel patterns on the Web, then, when you're out and about, dial up ***www.railtrack.co.uk/i.wml***. The software takes a guess at where you are and where you want to go, then finds the next train. Cool!

Now if only it could make the damn things run on time for once...

Speaking of which, catch up with the latest rail news from Swedish rail nut, Erik. Trainspotters can access Erik's site at ***eriksrailnews.com/wap.wml***.

5 FIND GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

Dr Frasier Crane is living in your mobile – at Therapyindex.com (***tagtag.com/therapyindex***). It's a directory for counselling and psychotherapy helplines, although when we looked it only had links for organisations based in the north-west of England. Hard luck for the rest of the country – or maybe that's where they're most needed...?

6 FEED YOURSELF

To trawl through more than 30,000 British restaurants, hotels and bars, go to ***wap.menunet.com*** – and you'll soon be able to order a take-away and pay for it online. Curry-heads should head for

WAP

4 PLAY A GAME

When you're waiting on the platform for the thrice-delayed 18:57 to Didcot Parkway, how are you going to amuse yourself? Play a game, that's how. Try out wapalised versions of old favourites like Hangman (***wap.brainsys.cz/game.asp***), chess (play games against online opponents at ***wap.chromefish.co.uk/chess***, while keeping up with UK club info at ***www.chesscorner.com***), mah jong (***simpletag.net***) and even football (***wap.picofun.com***). Then there are text-based RPGs, such as Arena at ***www.wap-games.nl/games.wml*** and Megabug at ***www.wapmore.com/mega.bug***; lottery games such as ***www.grouplotto.com***; trivia quizzes (Phishy Trivia at ***wap.phishy.net***, True or False? at ***users.anytimenow.com/pbeales/quiz1.wml***); brainteasers like Get a Clue! at ***www.mysterynet.com/wap/get*** and Wappy Matches at ***wappy.to/match.cgi***; and fantasy trading games (try Popex at ***mmm.popex.com***, where you buy and sell shares in pop groups).

Many of the above can be accessed through specialist games portals. Check out Wapscallion (***www.wapscallion.net***), Wireless Games (***www.wirelessgames.com/index.wml***) and a2b (***www.a2bwap.com/gamesentertainment.wml***). But the one to keep an eye on is UK giant, Gameplay. At ***mobile.gameplay.com*** they've put their magazine, *Spank*, online, as well as a brace of games – Hairy Harry's House and Arctic Love – with more to follow.

www.curryhouse.net/wap, which allows anyone dying for a ruby to search by postcode, read restaurant reviews – even find the nearest offie. Alternatively, search the CurryPages database on the move at ***wap.currypages.com***. And if chewing on a overpriced burger in a central London 'theme' restaurant is more your thing, use the tourist-friendly Dining Guide at ***www.diningguide.net***.

If you prefer to spend time in your own kitchen, but suffer from a phobia towards cookery books, you can get recipes wapped straight to your mobile. Check out ***www.wapdrive.net/recipe***. The dishes sound delicious, but what are you supposed to do? Copy down the recipes by hand?

7 MIX A DRINK

Alcohol and mobies aren't a natural fit, as anyone who's ever been deafened by a hundred marketing executives phoning each other up in a West End bar will testify. But that hasn't stopped no less than three outfits putting cocktail recipes online. Take your pick from ***m-cocktails.com***, ***www.wap2bar.com*** and ***wap.webtender.com*** – all of which offer a suspiciously similar blend of top 10s, cocktail of the week and ingredients search engine...

8 MAKE A BET

Addicted to gambling? Then let WAP feed your habit! Now you can lose your shirt 24/7 thanks to BetMart (***www.betmart.com/wap.wml***), which brings a personal element to the proceedings: challenge rival punters or post your own odds on anything from golf to 'current affairs', then wait for some mug to take you up. More traditional betting – you against the bookie – is available at ***www.etherbet.com/eb.wml***, which offers odds on horseracing, greyhounds, football, American football, tennis and motor racing. High Street giant William Hill has also gone WAP. You can access your online account at ***wap.willia mhill.co.uk/wap***.

When your money's gone, play fantasy casino games at ***www.fantastock. com/casino/index.wml***.

THE BIG FIVE

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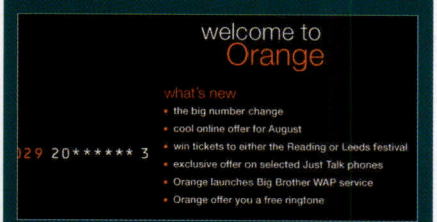
Content partners include BBC News, Loot, MapQuest, dotmusic and ebookers, and you can search every British telephone directory via PhoneNetUK. Calls cost 10p per minute.

ONE2ONE
www.one2one.co.uk
News from the BBC and Eurosport, weather from the Met office, games to play... and not much else. Calls cost 5p per minute.



ORANGE ***www.orange.co.uk***
Partners include ITN, the Press Association, Scene One and Thompson Directories – and growing fast. You can even follow *Big Brother* to find out who's been chucked out. Calls cost 5p per minute.

VIRGIN MOBILE ***www.virginmobile.com***
Only just gone live, Virgin's content was still being firmed up as we went to press. Likely to include news from Yahoo!, Unmissable TV and shopping opportunities through Virgin.

VODAFONE
www.vodafone.net
Already partnered with 150 sites, including the AA, Sporting Bet and Thomas Cook. Calls cost 10p per minute.

Choose from WapJack, WaPoker and Slot Machine, and watch the hours fly by!

9 MANAGE YOUR FINANCES

If you've actually won some dosh following your wireless betting activities, you'll want to know where to salt it away. The financial sector is jumping onto the WAP bandwagon – good starting points are portal sites MoneyExtra (***wap.moneyextra.com***), which can download share graphs to your phone; Mobile Invest (***www.mobile-invest.co.uk***); the Financial Times (***wap.ft.com***); 123Jump (***www.123jump.com/wap***); and Internet Banking.com, which compares British banks (***wap.ukwapbanking.com***).

If you want to keep track of the latest dotcom closures while on the move, bookmark a share site – Try Stock Smart at ***agsub.stocksmart.com/ss.wml***, Stock Point at ***www.stockpoint.com*** and Interactive Investor at ***mobile.iii.co.uk*** for quotes and FTSE 100 information. The London Stock Exchange has also gotten in on the act (***wap.priceinhand.com***), while StockAlerts.com (***wap.stock-alerts.com***) will warn you of good news – and bad – worldwide. For hot tips, try UK Invest at ***wap. ukinvest.com***, while gung ho investors can charge ahead at ***www.wapdrive.net/fillyaboots***.

Concerns over WAP's lack of security means Britain's banks are slow to warm to WAP, although Internet pioneer First Direct is already trialling a wireless version of its service – go to ***www.firstdirect.com/wap/index. wml***. You can also get a mortgage quote via E Loan (***wap.eloan.com/uk***), or perform currency conversions at ***www.oanda.com/converter/classic?user=phone*** – if you can be bothered to key in that monster of a URL...

10 PUT A ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD

Several Web-based property services have WAP sites up and running. Take a look at Under One Roof's impressive site (***wap.underoneroof.co.uk***) where you can choose from sales, rentals or property news. Homepages is serving up thousands of houses from estate agents across the country, at ***wap.homepages.co.uk***. If flatsharing's more your thing, you can browse through Loot's huge database at ***wap.loot.com/wml/flats.wml*** – although you'll need to know the postcode of the area you're interested in. If you're over in the Emerald

IT'S GOT TO START SOMEWHERE

The hype surrounding WAP has generated a phenomenal amount of interest. But most of the reporting seems to skate over what the WAP experience is: unexciting. It's a throwback to Teletext; to the early days when Web pages were simply text on a dull, grey background.

This makes WAP excellent for text-based services such as news and email, but not a lot else – and as any SMS junkie knows, typing on a mobile phone is cumbersome. But every technology needs its early adopters: people who buy new kit when it first comes out. Remember how we laughed when we saw people lugging round huge cases that transpired to be the batteries for the very early mobile phones? Not so funny now we're all using them.

The good news is, Net access on your phone is set to improve at a phenomenal rate. WAP 2.0 is already in the pipeline, although no-one is sure how long the pipeline is. It should see a shift in the direction of i-Mode, the Japanese alternative to WAP, which offers a permanent Net connection and colour screens.

However there's a lot to discuss before that happens, so just be content that it's going to improve. If you don't believe us, take a trip down memory lane to see how time has seen improvements in other technologies, and be safe in the knowledge WAP will get better quicker than any of these...

NEWSPAPERS

The Sun can get away with having a colour picture taking up the whole of the front page. It's worth remembering that, when papers first came out, all you got was a piece of paper with smudged text on it.

HISTORY OF BRITISH NEWSPAPERS ***www.bl.uk/collections/newspaper/britnews.html***

BOOKS

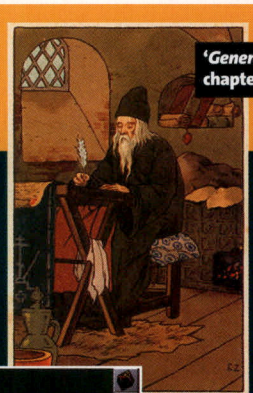
Thanks to modern printing presses it's no longer left to monks to sit around all day writing copies of the Bible. Although the monks, being fans of calligraphy, did make their pages look cool.

HISTORY OF PRINTING ***www.xs4all.nl/~knops/timetab.html***

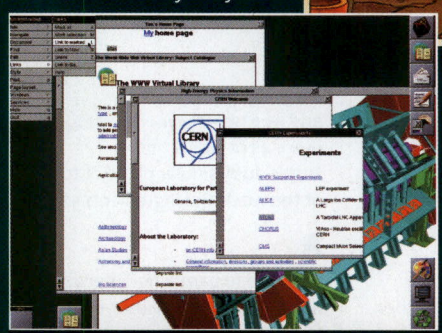
TELEVISION

Seventy-five years ago, John Logie Baird obtained the world's first TV picture. It was black and white, jerky and crude. Now there's digital television, millions of channels and, if there's so much as a flicker on the screen, we complain. It's still jerky and crude, though.

TIMELINE OF TELEVISION HISTORY ***www.civilization.ca/cmc/tv/tvo2eng.html***



'Generation X, chapter one...'



'Have you got a copy of *Fly Fishing* by JR Hartley?'

INTERACTIVE TELEVISION

It's all very easy for Net users to ridicule the likes of Teletext and Ceefax, but they were groundbreakers. Teletext was the ideal hunting ground for last-minute holidays, news and TV listings before the Net came along – although it looked bloody awful then and still does now. But it was still the first example of interactive TV, whereas Sky can now let you control which camera you're watching. ***www.teletext.co.uk***

WORLD WIDE WEB

The Internet is the fastest moving technology there has ever been, and you only have to look at the development of Web pages to see that. Go back three or four years and most sites were little more than text on a grey background. In the short space of time between then and now we're faced with multimedia Shockwave Flash animations whirling across our screens...

SAY HI TO THE INVENTOR OF THE WEB AT ***www.w3.org***

Isle, log onto ***www.irishproperty.net*** and search by location or price.

12 READ THE GOOD BOOK

Christians aren't always thought of as being in the first wave of emerging technology, traditionally preferring the tambourine to the laptop, but you'll have no trouble getting God to answer your phone. If you know your scriptures, the Mobile Bible (***www.mobilebible.com***) will see you through the Valley of Death quickly. Selected content from 39 books are online. If you want a random verse or need to track down a Biblical reference, try Gospel Search at ***wap.gospelsearch.com***. Meanwhile, the World English Bible at ***wap.mobible.org/menu.wml*** offers not only a dandy search function, but selected passages for those whose faith might be waivering.

Most impressive, however, is the Australian site, Jumbuck, which has put the entire New Testament onto WAP, with the Old Testament promised in the near future. See for yourself at ***jumbuck.com/wap/reference_bible.wml***. Hallelujah!

13 GET A HOROSCOPE

If you daren't step out the front door without your daily dose of hokum, unravel the secrets of the stars over your mobile. Astrowap (***www.webupkeep.com/wap/mainmenu.wml***) provides a list of astrological signs and links to their respective horoscopes. Not to be outdone, camp gutbucket Russell Grant will clog up bandwidth with daily weekly and monthly horoscopes at ***wap.russellgrant.com***. At least you can't see his leering, cardigan-clad body via WAP. Yet.

15 GET THE LATEST SCORES

Sports fans are now only a phone call away from the latest news and results. For a whole range of sporting activity, try Sports.com (***mmm.sports.com***), Total Sports (***wap.totalsports.net***), Unwired-Sport.com (***www.unwiredsport.com/index.wml***), Sportal (***www.sportal.co.uk/mobile/ index.wml***) and WapaResult (***www.waparesult.com/index.wml***). The latter got 40,000 hits on the weekend of the England vs Germany Euro 2000 match.

Football is particularly well served via WAP. Web site Zoo Football has wapped up its contents at ***wap.zoofootball.com***, all delivered 'in the style you love so much'. Many of the big clubs also have fan sites up and running, such as Red Issue (for Man United news at ***www.redissue.co.uk/wap***); the Red Machine for Liverpool lovers (***www.towle.freeserve.co.uk/wap.wml***); the Gunners are served by the appropriately named ***arseweb.com/wap***; Knees Up Mother Brown is there for the needs of Hammers fans (***buzzed.co.uk/mobile/?whufc***); and Man City's news and views are at ***www.manci-ty.net/wap/index.wml***. Oh yes, Tooting & Mitcham United have also got in on the act, at ***www.wapdrive.net/staylorz***, (Latest result: a 2-0 loss to Chessington.)

Other specialist sports sites include Formula 1 Live (***www.europewap.com/f1/f1menu.wml***), which includes maps of all the circuits; ***wap.autosport.com*** for, well, autosport; and ***wap.homeofformulaone.com*** for the latest results. Golfers can check out British courses via Golf World at ***www.golfonthemove.com/gw_menu.wml***, or upload their scores hole-by-hole thanks to eGolf Score: ***www.egolfscore.com/wireless***. Skateboarders, meanwhile, can drag their baggy-trousered arses over to ***www.the-boardmag.com/wap***, while, from December, skiers can access snow reports via Pistoff (***pistoff.com/wap.wml***).

16 BUY STUFF

OK, you could always use your phone to call stores and order goods, but suppose it's late. Or Sunday. Or a bank holiday. That's when you'll want to buy by WAP. Many of these sites require that you're pre-registered on the Web, but once your details have been saved, you can shop 'til you drop. For CDs and DVDs, try Boxman on ***wap.boxman.com/index.asp***; computer games can be bought on the Gameplay wapsite at ***mobile.gameplay.com***; there are 40 clothing lines on offer, plus a chance to win vouchers at Dressmart (***wap.dressmart.com***); while PDAs, notebook computers and PCs are available via Leek Computers at ***wap.lcc.co.uk***.

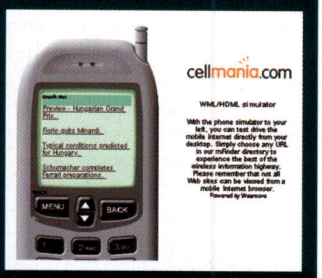
Car-buyers can use Autolocate to search by dealer, model or location at ***wap.autolocate.***

WAP SHORTCUTS

You've probably noticed that some of the addresses for the WAP sites on these pages are a trifle long. So before you check a few out via your phone, take them for a test-drive using a Web wap emulator. Log on to ***www.gelon.net*** or ***mfinder.cellmania.com*** and click on one of their recommended wapsites. A mini-browser will open up, into which you can type a new site's URL and see what it's like – saving you from horrendous bills and the increased chance of arthritis as you curse your phone's crappy keypad.

Alternatively, use a portal site. The 'big five' networks have set up easy-access portals linking to their partners, but you're not tied in to the services they think you should be using. Some of the best of the indies include ***m-central.com***, ***www.wapaw.com***, ***www.wapmore.com***, ***wap.shopsonthenet.com*** and ***www.waply.com***. You can even access rival networks' sites and see if their links are any better than yours – search their Websites for address details.

Best of all, you can use the power of the Net to set up your own, personalised portal. Register at ***uk.mobile.yahoo.com*** and assemble your own set of WAP bookmarks. Then, on your phone, dial up ***wap.yahoo.co.uk*** – and there they are. Magic!



Road-test WAPs at Cellmania.com

Un-jam the URL traffic of WAPs at Gelon.net.

14 FOLLOW THE NEWS

Your mobile network will have signed up a news vendor as a matter of course, but, if you're not afraid to wander off the beaten track, you'll find there's a host of competing services out there in wapland. Broadsheet addicts can now get *The Guardian* on their mobies, thanks to ***www.guardianunlimited.co.uk/wml***. Tabloid readers, meanwhile, are catered for by Anorak, which summarises the red-tops' output with intelligence and humour: ***www.anorak.co.uk/home.wml***.

For an American spin on 'Ooroope', try ABC News (including the excellent Mr Showbiz entertainment news) via ***abcnews.com/index.hdml***, or 7am News at ***wap.7am.com***. The adventurous can try the Daily Learner at ***wml.ics.uci.edu/index.wml***, which learns its users' news preferences and subsequently tailors its content. Allegedly. As far as regional UK news goes, is London leading the way? No, it's Wales. The Western Mail WAPs itself up daily, so for Welsh Assembly updates ('and more!') go to ***www.totalwales.com/wap/index.cfm***.

Finally, specialist news content – such as science, technology and health – can be found and tailored via two of the UK's leading portals: Yahoo! at ***wap.yahoo.co.uk*** and Excite at ***mobile.excite.co.uk***. Tree-huggers, meanwhile, can chart the destruction of the planet thanks to Friends of the Earth's worthy wireless news (***www.foe.co.uk/wap/index.wml***), pop fans can see what's number one in the charts – plus other music news – at ***wappy.to/ukmc***, while information technology fiends can get all the vital industry headlines at ***wap.the451.com***.

11 GET INSURED

Worried about it raining on The Biggest Day of Your Life? Then type in *wap.insurancebusters.co.uk* at the first sign of clouds, and they'll happily give you a quote for wedding insurance, not to mention travel cover for that rapidly rearranged honeymoon.

co.uk, or import a high-performance Japanese motor at ***www.discountimports.co.uk/wap.php3***. Take part in auctions at ***www.bluecycle.com/wap/bluecycle. wml***, where every purchase goes towards funding crime reduction programmes across the country. Vinophiles can order booze on the move at ***wap.uk.rouge-blanc.com/index.wml***, while book-lovers can buy from a top 10 list at ***www.bookbrain.co.uk/bbwap/wmenu.asp***. And if the thing you really need in your life is...

17 COMPARE PRICES

If you think you've found a bargain on the High Street, whip out your phone and run a price check on what the online stores are asking. Metaprices at ***wap.metaprices.com/index.wml*** compares book, music, video, and software prices. Checkaprice, at ***wap.checkaprice.com***, lets you compare prices for white goods, while Parker's Guide, at ***wap.parkers.co.uk***, is the secondhand car-buyers' bible. This is surely the future of WAP!

18 TRACK A PARCEL

Keep an eye on that crystal vase you're sending grandma via your mobile. See whether it's already been dropped by DHL (*wap.dhl.com*), FedEx (*wap.tanger.cz/ewfdx_e.wml*), TNT Express (*wap.tanger.cz/ewtnt_e.wml*) or UPS (*wap.tanger.cz/ewups_e.wml*).

another mobile, try Freedom Phones at ***www.freedomphones.co.uk/wap***.

Finally, how many times have you popped round to the local butterfly cocoon store, only to find it's early closing? Well fret no more – now you can order insects 24 hours a day, and get news on local entomological meetings, at ***tagtag.com/mdecleen***. We're not making this up, you know.

19 BOOK A HOLIDAY

Like a travel agent in your pocket, use WAP to set up your hols. It's no surprise that ***Lastminute.com*** is wapped up – find them at ***mobile.lastminute.com/wap***, for information on worldwide flights, accommodation and local entertainment. Then there's Worldof.net at ***mobile.worldof.net***, which deals in European package holidays and flights. For hotels worldwide, try Hotelcatalogue at ***wap.hotelcatalogue.net*** or the accommodation search engine at ***wap.hotelguide.com***. 2PL (***wap.2pl.com***) offers international hotel information, Check-Inn.com (***www.check-inn.com/wap***) is yet another hotel search engine, while weary road warriors will raise a cheer for OffRamp (***offramp.co.uk***), which lists locations in the UK to eat, sleep, fuel, and shop, searchable by road or town.

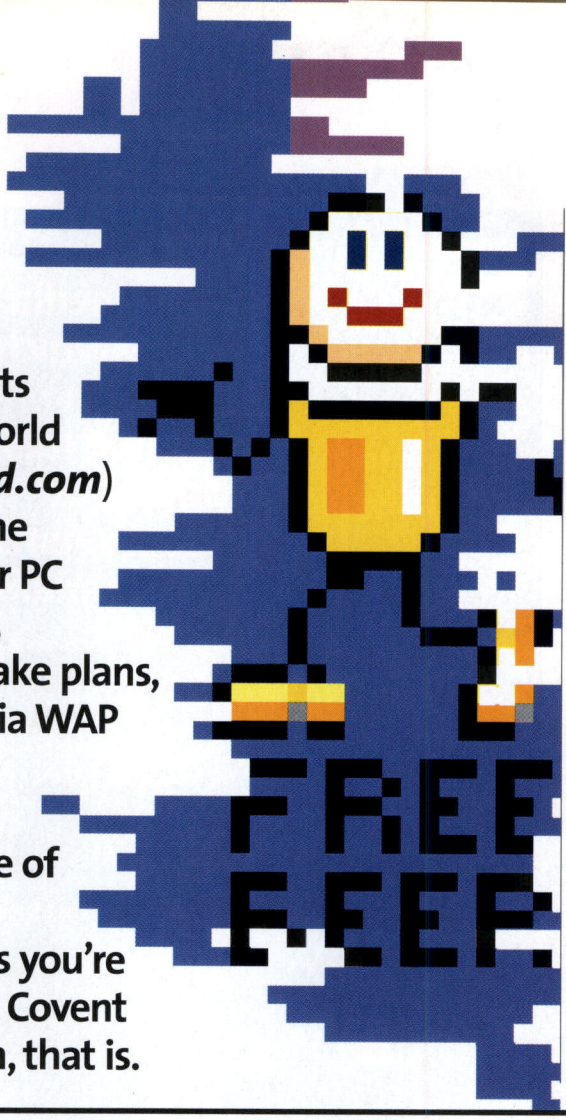
Finally, if you're holidaying in a country beginning with the letter 'I', use IRLWap at ***www.irlwap.com/i.wml*** to research all things Irish, or Giroscopio (***www.giroscopio.com/wap***) for hotels in Italy.

20 SPEAK A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

If you forgot to buy a dictionary before you set off on holiday and happen to find yourself in Germany, Turkey or, er, Romania, you'll find help via WAP. If you don't spracken zie Deutsche, go to ***dict.leo.org/wap***; anyone heading for Antalya should check out ***www.hazar.com/dictionary.wml***, while relatives visiting Count Dracula should bookmark ***dictionare.com/mobile***. A more general site is M-Translate (***m-translate.com***), which cross-references hundreds of words and phrases between many European and world languages. Finally, if you're confronted by a long-haired, goateed, chino-clad young man speaking gobbledegook, head for ***wap.webopedia.com*** – it's a dictionary of computing and Internet technology terms.

23 GET FREE BEER

Designed to be used in conjunction with its Website, My Wap World (*www.mywapworld.com*) allows you to plan the night's fun from your PC via interactive maps, email your mates make plans, then keep in touch via WAP and text messaging. They'll even set you up with a beer at one of the nation's top nitespots – as long as you're in Soho, Clerkenwell, Covent Garden and Brighton, that is.



21 FIND A PHONE NUMBER

Calling people up is a natural thing for mobile-users to want to do and, thanks to ***MobilePhone No.com***, you can wear down those batteries all the more quickly. Dial up ***www.mobilephoneno.com/wml/index.wml*** and you'll find a directory of mobile phone numbers for UK businesses and individuals.

22 SORT OUT YOUR TRAVELS

Another waptastic idea: No longer need you stumble off a plane in the middle of nowhere, looking for entertainment, grub or just a place to sleep. Start with a city guide, such as 10Best.com (***wap.10best.com***), which features lodging, restaurant, and entertainment guides to cities around the world, or Microguides at ***www.waptown.net/guides/mg.wml***, which provides guides to cities around the world. If you're in Paris, London or Stockholm, CitiKey (***wap.citikey.com***) allows you to search for a good time alphabetically or from a specific street. It's got 5,000 entries for London alone.

Other UK-centric sites include Sessami (***wap.sessami.com***), which allows you to find a film, a drink or a bite in London, Manchester, Glasgow or Edinburgh. Use the mighty Multimap (***www.multimap.com/wap***) to find your way to wherever you're going via its postcode search function. Ents24.com at ***www.ents24.com/index.wml*** is a

There are now 13 characters every company should employ.

OneClickHR.com is the new website that takes care of all your people problems. Payroll, employment data, recruitment admin, reference and pre-employment health checks, psychometric assessments, time recording, contracts, employment law… and free advice and downloads galore. *Click on today* for the virtual HR department you simply can't afford to ignore.

OneClickHR.com

The complete on-line answer to workforce admin

TW0900

UK-wide events listings site, while Somewherenear (***somewherenear.com/wap***) lists pubs, hotels, curry houses and theaters. Clubbers should check out 4 Clubbers (***www.wapped-out.co.uk/wap/4clubbers/index.wml***), while hip-hopping Londoners can find out where to bust a move at Bigger Deffer (***www.wapdrive.net/biggerdeffer***).

Even if you're staying in, WAP can come to the rescue. Plan your evening's viewing on the bus home via Unmissable TV, at ***www.unmissabletv.com/txw/wap.wml***.

24 PLEASE A LADY

Whenever a new medium gets up and running, the smut merchants move in – and WAP's no exception. But for true sexual nirvana, ignore the dodgy Danish sites promising the world and delivering nothing but heartache. Instead, promise your woman a treat, point your mobile at ***wwwmmm.free.fr/kamasutra/kamasutra.wml*** and read WAP-friendly instructions for Aphrodite's Delight, the Flower in Bloom and the Knot of Fame. No diagrams, sadly...

25 FIND WEIRDNESS

Rest assured – WAP's as chock-a-block with weirdness as the World Wide Web. Improve your mind with Phone A Fact (***www.phoneafact.com/index.wml***), which includes a searchable thesaurus, links page, measurement conversions and 'This Week in History'. If you're stuck for the atomic number of Einsteinium – and who can say it hasn't happened to them? – search Jumbuck.com's chemistry database at ***www.jumbuck.com/wap/cs.wml***. It's 252.100, by the way. Anyone running the glorious SETI@home screensaver can check their stats at ***seti.matrix.pl/setiatwap***. The friendless can create their very own WAP-a-gotchi, via ***wap.skol.ch***. Scouts are always prepared – and now you know how. It's because their bob-a-job-bin' fingers are busily tapping away on Scoutnet (***www.scoutnet.org.uk/wap***), complete with information and resources for Akela and Sixers alike. Anyone looking to learn to dance should call up at ***www.dancewap.co.uk***, for weekly dance classes that are searchable by postcode.

Amusing anecdotes and nuggets of wisdom can be uploaded to the Hitchhikers' Guide to the Galaxy – h2g2 – at ***www.h2g2.com***. Don't Panic! And last, but not least, which music star has been the first to get a WAP presence? That cyber veteran, David Bowie? Perhaps techno-head Thomas Dolby? Er, no – it's Limahl. The poodle-topped popster is posting news and gig info at ***www.limahl.co.uk/index.wml***.

POST-WAP

Earlier this year, five companies paid a collective £22.5 billion pounds to win third generation (3G) mobile phone licences. The new licences use UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunications Standard) instead of GSM (Global System for Mobile communication).

What that means in English is that 3G will effectively bring together the phone, the Internet and video technology into a small device, and it will also offer loads of bandwidth – meaning information will find its way to your phone 40 times quicker than it does now. More importantly, users should have a permanent connection to the Net and services can be localised, as the phone lets the network know where you are. But what does it mean for the user? Well, if the phone manufacturers and network operators are to be believed, 3G phones are going to change your life.

3G is the multimedia vision which has been painted many times but never seems to materialise

You'll be video conferencing; watching trailers of movies on your phone before buying tickets for them; gambling on it, and watching the race or event to see if you've won; watching rock concerts... In fact, it will be the whole multimedia vision which has been painted many times but never seems to materialise.

Speaking of which, it's probably prudent to not hold your breath just yet. For a start, there has to be a handset of some sort. This could come in the form of a PDA with built-in phone, or a phone with a larger screen. And when the manufacturers have created the handsets, there needs to be services offered on them.

As with WAP, people will be clamouring to offer content, but enough Internet ideas have gone wrong to suggest there won't be many people with the funding and intelligence to provide reliable services when 3G hits the world. And then the network providers have to decide how you will pay for it all. With a permanent connection to the Net you won't be paying per minute, so it's being suggested that users will pay for bandwidth – ie the amount of data you send and receive.

Once that little lot's sorted out, you'll be enjoying the multimedia paradise everyone promises. But there's a long way to travel just yet – and at least WAP is here today. And it works. Sort of.

WIN A £10,000 E-COMMERCE WEBSITE

Do you have a business and yearn to sell your wares online?

This could be your lucky day. *The net*, in conjunction with Internet services company Bowstone, is giving away a fully-functional e-commerce site, worth £10,000. It includes a shopping cart and checkout facility, product catalogue, supply and integration of a Payment Gateway credit card authorisation facility, 10-page site to complement the facility, plus consultation and training (please note this is limited to one and a half days).

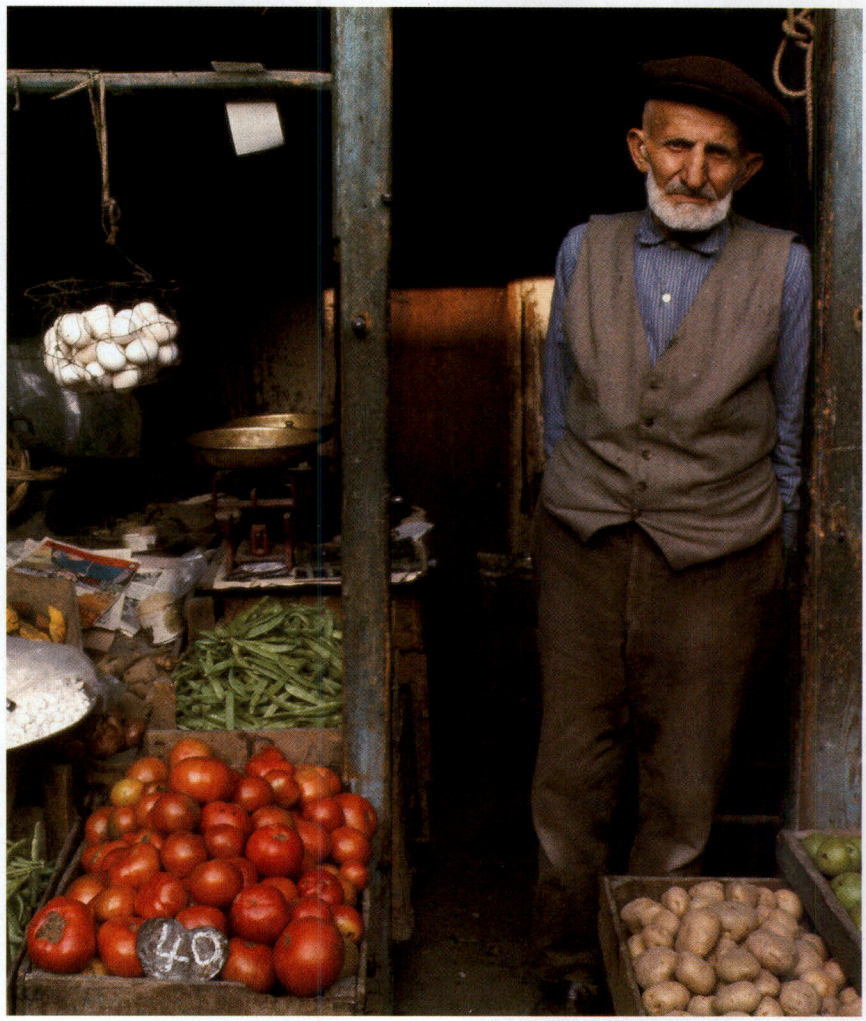
Plus, five lucky runners-up will receive a 25 per cent discount voucher (valid until 1 February 2001) off any Web site e-commerce facility developed by Bowstone.

BOWSTONE

BOWSTONE specialises in customisable e-commerce and interactive Web sites. It aims to provide clients with solutions for today and for future strategic developments. As well as e-commerce, in-house expertise includes WAP, project analysis, relational database integration and creative design.

TO ENTER the competition, go to the Bowstone's Web site at ***www.bowstone.com*** where you will be asked to answer two simple questions. Further instructions for entry will be found here.

The prize includes a shopping cart and checkout facility, plus credit card authorisation



TERMS & CONDITIONS Full Credit Card transaction process is dependent upon the winner being awarded an Internet Merchant ID Number. The winner will be responsible for providing full content and logos. The site will be designed to the current corporate identity. Any additional work not part of the Prize will be provided for at a 25 per cent discount to a maximum discount value of £5,000. Hosting is not supplied, however we can advise and recommend suitable and cost effective hosting companies. All meetings are to take place on Bowstone's Premises in Archway, London. The Web Site for the main prize will consist of static HTML pages only. The winner will be responsible for populating the product database. Bowstone will choose the winner and runners. No correspondence will be entered into and no alternative prizes will be available. The competition is restricted to the UK only. Closing date for entries is 4 October 2000. Employees and their relatives of Bowstone and Haymarket Publishing are not eligible to enter. Information on the winner will be available within four weeks of the closing date and will be supplied on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope.

'Over 1.7 million people downloaded the Lord of the Rings trailer in the first 24 hours it was on the site'

MOVIE MADNESS

Want to see Liv Tyler in *Lord of the Rings*? Sorry, you have to wait until late 2001. But never fear, we've found the sites that'll bring the new season of blockbusters to your desktop – now! Roll-up for the hottest seat in Tinseltown

THE CELL

- ***www.cellmovie.com***
- **Jennifer Lopez, Vincent D'Onofrio, Vince Vaughn**
- **Director: Tarsem**
- **Cert: TBC**
- **Release date: 15 September 2000**

What's it about?

The first of three Jennifer Lopez films to come out over the next year, *The Cell* has Lopez playing an empathetic therapist whose treatment consists of taking virtual walks inside her patients' minds. When serial killer Stargher (D'Onofrio) slips into a coma leaving the whereabouts of his last victim unknown, the FBI has to persuade Lopez to enter Stargher's mind in an effort to save the final captive. Directed by first-timer Tarsem, who cut his teeth on Nike ads and R.E.M videos, *The Cell* could be this year's *Silence of the Lambs*.

The site enters the world of the id, ego and superego

What's the official site like?

Slick and faintly disturbing – after a grim flash movie (with no obvious 'skip intro' escape) you enter the world of the id, ego and superego. From here you can take an empathy test to see if you're suited to the job of mind wanderer, download some screensavers of Lopez and check out the case histories of various serial killers.

WHERE CAN I...

See the trailer? ***On the official site***
Find out what projects Jennifer is planning next?
www.jenniferlopez.com
Gen up on what makes a psychopath tick?
www.serialkillers.net
Buy a poster for the movie? ***www.newline.com***

Lopez' rejuvenati... skin peel had go... horribly wron...

CHARLIE'S ANGELS

- ***www.spe.sony.com/movies/charliesangels***
- **Cameron Diaz, Drew Barrymore, Lucy Liu, Bill Murray**
- **Director: Mark McGrath**
- **Cert: TBC**
- **Release date: 24 November 2000**

Woman from Atlantis never caught on

What's it about?

Gone are the fabulous flicked-hairdos and flared trouser suits which became synonymous with the 70s. This time round, it's all Lycra and high heels as we're introduced to the all-new angels Dylan (Barrymore), Alex (Liu) and Natalie (Cameron). And their mission? To find the kidnapper of billionaire technology guru Eric Knox while wearing a selection of lovely frocks. With millions of dollars at stake it's time for the Angels to use their 'feminine charm, high-tech gadgets and hand-to-hand combat' (as the press release puts it) all without breaking sweat or one of their nails.

Could be deeply cheesy or tongue-in-cheek sassy – there's everything to play for.

What's the site like?

Already the official site is very glam. There are no plot or cast lists, but plenty of pictures of the lovely ladies together with a trailer and a choice of background colours and music. Anyone registering to get future updates has to take the Angel quiz to be assigned their very own Angel. It's well worth it because when the test is over you get to see a Quicktime movie clip of the Angel in question.

WHERE CAN I...

See the trailer? ***On the official site***
Find out about the original TV series?
home.swipnet.se/~w-78172/
Hire my very own female private detective?
If anyone has one, Pinkertons will. Give them a try www.pcis.co.uk
Get the Farrah Fawcett hairdo?
www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/5257/farrahpage.htm

MAIN PICTURE: JONATHAN GLYNN-SMITH/WWW.CELEBRITYPICTURES.CO.UK

SHAFT RETURNS

Can you dig it?

Jackson models 'Man at Avanti'

- *www.shaft-themovie.com*
- Samuel L Jackson, Christian Bale, Vanessa Williams
- Director: John Singleton
- Cert: TBC
- Release date: 8 September 2000

What's it about?

Nearly 30 years after the first *Shaft* movie made Richard Rowntree a fully-fledged sex god, Samuel L Jackson is back as Rowntree's nephew John Shaft – just as lean, mean and tough-talking as the original and clad in an Armani leather trenchcoat that'll make pulses quicken at a hundred paces. This time Shaft's enemies are as follows: Walter Wade (Bale) a rich kid killer that Shaft's put in jail once before, corrupt police colleagues plus the obligatory drug lord looking for payback after being dissed by Shaft. It's a good job Shaft has the comely Vanessa Williams and streetwise Busta Rhymes in his corner.

As lean, mean and tough-talking as the original

What's the site like?

Someone's put real thought into the official site for *Shaft Returns*, combining interactive goodies with background information on the whole Blaxploitation genre. There's quicktime interviews with the stars, clips from the films and a shockwave version of pinball called – you guessed it – Shaftball, plus an interactive Blaxploitation timeline and filmography for anyone who wants to look at the history to this movie.

WHERE CAN I...

Find the trailer? ***On the official site***
Read more about Samuel L Jackson?
member.aol.com/gifhack/sam.html
Be inspired about Blaxploitation?
www.blaxploitation.com/index.html
Get the background on the original movie?
www.johnshaft.com
Read an advance review?
www.moviesforguys.com
Buy that leather jacket? ***www.giorgioarmani.com***

O BROTHER WHERE ART THOU?

- *studio.go.com/movies/obrother/index.html*
- George Clooney, John Turturro, Tim Blake Nelson
- Director: Joel Coen
- Cert: 12
- Release date: 15 September 2000

What's it about?

Loosely based on mythic Greek story *The Odyssey*, the Coen brothers have updated the epic journey and switched it to the middle of the American Depression. Three escaped convicts, Ulysses McGill (Clooney), Pete (Turturro) and sweet-natured Delmar (Tim Blake Nelson) are off to McGill's farm in search of the haul he buried after a bank heist.

Fans of the Coens will enjoy the not-so-subtle references to the original story – look out for Cyclops in the form of the one-eyed bible salesman and the trio of Southern belles as the Sirens.

Look out for the Cyclops as a one-eyed bible salesman

Surreal but engaging.

What's the official site like?

True to the movie's off-beat nature, this is the kind of site that will drive seasoned surfers absolutely crazy. An interactive map traces the convicts' journey – significant places pop up with pictures from the movie but the subsequent links for movie clips don't work. Disappointingly for an official site, there's also no trailer, cast list, production notes or anything of real use, meaning interested parties are better off visiting one of the fan sites below.

WHERE CAN I...

Watch the trailer? ***www.popcorn.co.uk***
Read up on the Coen Brothers?
www.d.umn.edu/~bjohns33/
See a picture of where George Clooney lives?

George: floored by his own acting

members.aol.com/InScrubs/
Find out some more about the classic Preston Sturges film that inspired this movie title?
www.prestonsturges.com
Buy a Get Out of Jail Free card?
www.monopoly.com

ME MYSELF AND IRENE

- *www.memyselfandirene.com*
- Jim Carrey, Renee Zellweger
- Director: Bobby and Peter Farrelly

LORD OF THE RINGS

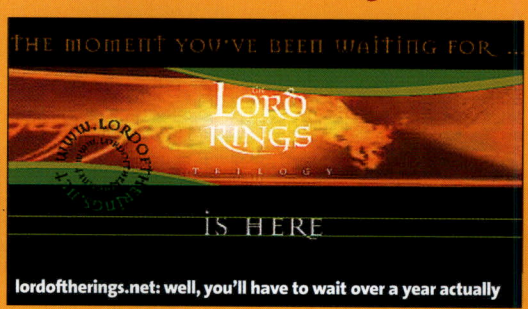
Read up on the movie while you wait for its release (over a year away)

A year or so ago the only people you'd find expressing an interest in JRR Tolkien would have been a handful of long-haired fantasy-fiction devotees and players of *Dungeons and Dragons*. That was before New Line cinema announced its plans to shoot three movies on *The Lord of the Rings*, suddenly making Tolkien the author to be seen reading in the power palaces of Hollywood.

But perhaps what nobody could have guessed was how *The Lord of the Rings* would turn out to be an Internet phenomena putting both *Blair Witch* and *Star Wars* in the shade.

One of the first sites into the fray was TheOneRing.net. (***www.theonering.net***) It was set up by two Kiwis (net names Xoanon and Tehanu) who saw they had a geographic advantage over the American film sites as all three films were made back-to-back in New Zealand. The site launched in the summer of 99 and,

The movies have made Tolkien the author to be seen reading in Hollywood



lordoftherings.net: well, you'll have to wait over a year actually

from the start, it earned a name for scoops. They were the first to break the story of Liv Tyler's casting and, more controversially, the first to show CGI imagery of one of the film's central characters, Gollum. 'We had the New Line folks seeing red,' says Xoanon. 'I finally took them down, but that was a big scoop for us.'

The site gets 3.5 million hits a week – figures to make any Net marketeer's eyes water. So what is the big deal about *LOTR*?

'Tolkien's work is the ultimate challenge of good versus evil,' explains Xoanon, 'but being an amateur filmmaker myself it's the technical aspect to the production that gets me excited – the massive scale and numbers.'

For an insider's look at the production it's worth checking out actor Ian McKellen's official Web site, ***mckellen.com***. Throughout filming McKellen filed a diary and answered fan questions on the making of the movie and he's recently been joined on the web by Christopher Lee at ***www.christopherleefanclub.com***. ***mcKellen.com*** is basic but it serves up the goods by being genuinely interactive; send Sir Ian an email and you're likely to find it answered on the site.

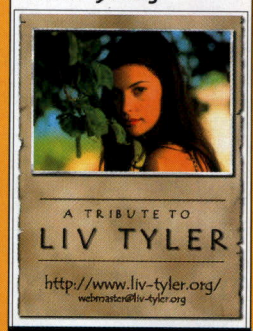
Sites such as TheOneRing and McKellen.com at first left New Line plodding in the background with a feeble web presence that called for action. After a slow start in which the official site was regularly scooped by the unofficial fansites, ***www.lordofthe rings.net*** earned respect when it put up the first trailer for the movie. Over 1.7 million people downloaded the trailer in the first 24 hours, making it the most popular download ever and beating *The Phantom Menace* by a cool 700,000 downloads.

And all this over a year before anyone sees the first *LOTR* movie in December 2001. Will it suffer from the over-hype that dogged *The Phantom Menace* or be the kind of success that makes *Titanic* look like an amateur effort? Wait and see.

OTHER SITES TO LOOK AT

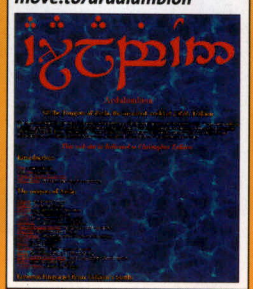
Overkill yet? No? Well read on...

OFFICIAL SITE:
www.lordoftherings.net
FANSITE:
www.theonering.net
CAST SITES:
www.mckellen.com
www.christopherlee fanclub.com
www.liv-tyler.org



Leaves at Liv-tyler.org

GUIDE TO TOLKIEN LANGUAGES
move.to/ardalambion



■ **Cert: 15**
■ **Release date: 22 September 2000**

What's it all about?

The Farrelly brothers' movie sick-fest continues with their follow-up to the hit *There's Something About Mary*. Jim Carrey plays a cop with split personalities; when he's Charlie he's the nicest guy you could hope to meet, but as alter ego Hank he's a foul-mouthed oaf. When he's detailed to take convict Irene (Zellweger) to prison, Charlie falls in love with her, forgets to take his medication, and both he and Hank end up fighting over Irene while trying to stay one step ahead of the hitmen who also – for various reasons – happen to be after her.

Proving that fart jokes and true love go hand-in-hand, expect milk rather than hair gel to be the in-movie joke this autumn.

What's the official site like?

Straightforward and direct, this site is a couple of gross jokes short of a Farrelly feature. Sure there are clips, postcards and plot details – but precious little else. One thing that is in its favour is the way it's written – the people behind the site obviously watched the movie rather than merely read the press release, so

'How can we fit in your car?'

3 secrets for smart people

Secret 1.

Team up with online Experts to do your work

Secret 2.

Never reveal everything you know

Secret 3.

....erm....see secret 2

Go to smarterwork.co.uk and get immediate access to thousands of online Experts working for you 24 hours a day 7 days a week in every field of expertise. It includes our 3-Step Total Quality Guarantee:™ Top Quality Experts, Customer Care and 100% Money Back guarantee. It's simple. It's serious. It's smart. Freephone 0800 085 0920

smarterwork.co.uk™

works for you and your business

BLAIR WITCH: MOMENTUM

Oh no – they didn't kill Kyle!

- www.blairwitch.com
- Tristen Skyler, Stephen Barker Turner, Jeffrey Donovan, Kim Director
- Director: Joe Berlinger
- Cert: tbc
- Release date: 27 October 2000

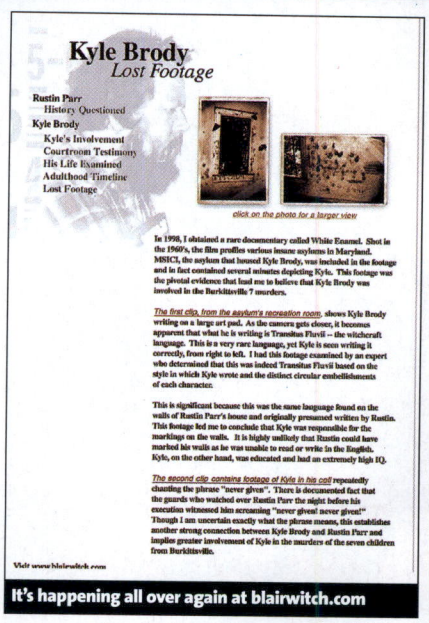
What's it about?

Set in present-day Burkittsville, the town is cashing in on its notoriety following *Blair Witch*'s success by offering guided tours. Four students take up the offer to spend the night close to the house where Rustin Parr supposedly killed seven children. The next morning the group regains consciousness without being able to account for the past five hours. When they return home, some of whatever evil lurked in the Burkittsville woods goes with them. A bigger budget, proper 35mm film stock and an award-winning director should make the *Blair Witch* sequel a must-see for Halloween.

What's the site like?

Anyone familiar with the way *Blair Witch* was marketed on the Web should be able to find their way around this site without too much trouble. Subtle links are hidden throughout the site together with links to other 'real' sites building up more of the background to the story behind the story. Confused? You will be.

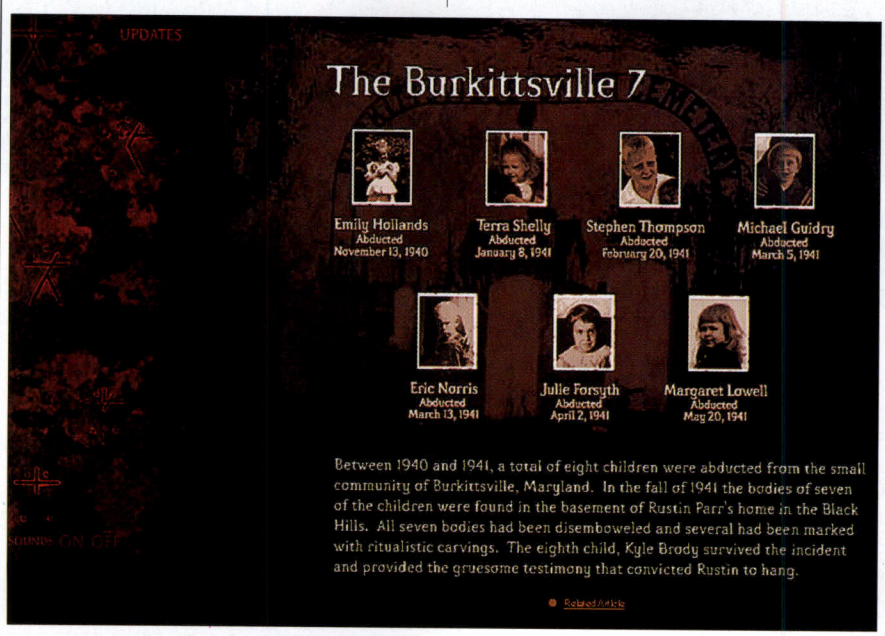
A bigger budget and an award-winning director



It's happening all over again at blairwitch.com

WHERE CAN I...

See the teaser trailer? ***www.1001ba.com***
Read about the real Burkittsville? ***www.burkittsvillemd.com***
Buy the *Curse of the Blair Witch* documentary? ***www.artisanent.com***
Learn to make my own multi-million dollar grossing film? ***www.bfi.org.uk***



the various elements and short quiz read like the Farrellys actually had an input.

WHERE CAN I...

See the trailer? ***movies.ign.com***
Find what Renee Zellweger's up to next? ***www.bridgetjones.co.uk***
See an advance review? ***www.rotten-tomatoes.com***
Learn which Jim Carrey movie features a cameo by Gun 'n Roses guitarist Slash? ***www.geocities.com/Hollywood/9090/***

PITCH BLACK

- www.pitch-black.com/blackbox/index.html
- Vin Diesel, Radha Mitchell
- Director: David Twohy
- Cert: 15
- Release date: 10 November 2000

What's it about?

When the spaceship Hunter Gratzner crash-lands on a planet with three suns things are grim, but could be worse. OK, so they've lost three quarters of their passengers and are left with a psychopathic convict Richard B Riddick (Diesel) on their hands, but he's had an operation that leaves him able to see only in the dark. All well and good, except it's time for the first eclipse for 23 years which manages to unleash murderous bat-like creatures from their caverns beneath the planet's surface – therefore forcing the survivors to rely on Riddick to deliver them from hell.

Take note – this isn't a movie for anyone scared of the dark.

What's the site like?

Anything sci-fi usually gets a pretty good representation on the Net and the *Pitch Black* site is no different. All the usual stuff can be found here – pictures, plot synopsis and cast list – plus both the theatrical trailer and an unreleased trailer. There's an inventive links section but the best bit is a downloadable, animated graphic novel showing you why Riddick had that little eye op. Nice.

The giant penis was gaining ground

WHERE CAN I...

Watch the trailer? ***On the official site***
Download pictures of Vin Diesel? ***go.to/vindiesel***
Read an advance review? ***www.filmcritic.com***
Buy a ticket to the moon? ***www.spaceadventures.com***
Find how to see in the dark? ***www.night-vision-gear.com***

HOLLOW MAN

- www.spe.sony.com/movies/hollowman
- Kevin Bacon, Elizabeth Shue, Josh Brolin
- Director: Paul Verhoeven
- Certificate: tba
- Release date: 29 September 2000

What's it about?

Following the unwritten movie law about scientists, Dr Sebastian Caine (Bacon) chooses to use himself, rather than any convenient lab animal, as a guinea pig for an invisibility serum. The drug works to order, but then the doctor discovers that being invisible actually has unhoped-for benefits, in particularly the power to spy on attractive lab assistants – in this case Elizabeth Shue.

Directed by Paul *Starship Troopers* Verhoeven, you can expect the *Hollow Man* to be chock-full of spectacular special effects – latex mask, anyone? – while the premise that invisibility brings with it a host of moral issues could make this the first Verhoeven movie with depth.

What's the official site like?

A messy introduction with pop-ups will bring you to this small but perfectly formed film site. Slick graphics and clear instructions lead through to the trailer, pictures, cast notes and movie clips. But best of all is the section where you can look at storyboards for a particular scene and then watch the rough-cut clip showing how it all came together on

HANNIBAL

Pull up a chair, grab a bottle of chianti and welcome the return of Dr Hannibal...

- ***www.mgm.com/hannibal***
- **Anthony Hopkins, Julianne Moore, Gary Oldman, Ray Liotta**
- **Director: Ridley Scott**
- **Cert: tbc**
- **Release date: tbc**

What's it about?

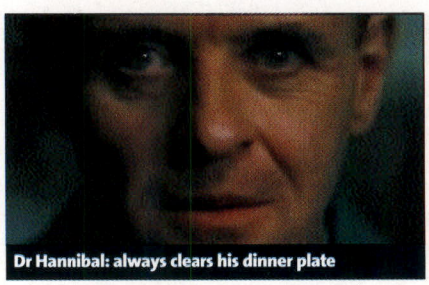
The sequel to *Silence of the Lambs* has been a long time in the making – partly due to 'issues' with the script which resulted in several scriptwriters 'having a go', and partly down to Jodie Foster's dithering about whether to reprise the role of Clarice Starling. In the event we have Anthony Hopkins making a welcome return as Hannibal the Cannibal, while Julianne Moore takes on FBI agent Starling. Set in Italy and America, this story begins where *Silence of the Lambs* ended – tracking down the elusive Dr Hannibal.

What's the official site like?

There's precious little on the official site given that the movie was still filming when we went to press. However it was the first site to carry the teaser trailer and is probably worth bookmarking for future information and the MGM newsletter. For more info about the film try some of the fan sites listed below.

WHERE CAN I...

Watch the trailer? ***The official site***
Find out who the Feds are currently after? ***www.fbi.gov***
Listen to Lecter fans doing their Anthony Hopkins impression? ***www.mischanet.net***
Buy a bottle of chianti? ***www.winecellar.co.uk***
Buy the book? ***www.amazon.com***



Dr Hannibal: always clears his dinner plate

screen. Other official movie sites should take note of such treatment.

WHERE CAN I...

Watch the trailer? ***www.film.com***
Play Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon? ***www.cs.virginia.edu/oracle/***
Buy a heat sensitive *Hollow Man* mousemat? ***store.yahoo.com/spestore/hollowmanstore.html***
Learn how to cope with spontaneous invisibility? ***users1.ee.net/pmason/invisibility.html***
Read the Plato story that started this invisibility malarkey off? ***www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy/3963***

COYOTE UGLY

- ***studio.go.com/movies/coyoteugly/flash_site.html***
- **Piper Perabo, Tyra Banks, Maria Bello**
- **Director: David McNally**
- **Cert: tbc**
- **Release date: 20 October 2000**

What's it about?

One look at the film poster gives you the five reasons for watching this movie – the enticing forms of model/actress Tyra Banks, *ER*'s Maria Bellow and three other comely lovelies who play the all-female bartending team at a New York bar. Slated by critics when it opened in America

Not even the sprinklers could get the Spices off stage

The plot makes soap operas seem profound

as having a 'plot that makes soap operas seem profound in comparison', *Coyote Ugly* is this season's *Showgirls*. Which, of course, doesn't mean it won't get an audience. One for the boys – or interested girls – only.

What's the site like?

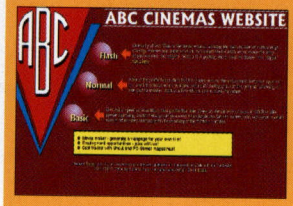
As cheesy as the movie. Where else would you find gems like a pick-up section that genuinely expects you to pull with the line, 'you're pretty hot. Someone better disable the smoke alarm'. Then there's the lyrics section where you can read stuff like, 'You can try to resist/Try to hide from my kiss/ But you can't fight the moonlight.' A classy effort.

WHERE CAN I...

Watch the trailer? ***On the official site***
Read about the real Coyote Ugly bar?
www.byway.net/%7 Ekfitz/coyote.htm
Check out the news on Piper Perabo?
www.piper-perabo.net
Find a cocktail recipe? ***www.webtender.com***
Go on a virtual pub crawl?
www.arachnid.co.uk/hullpub

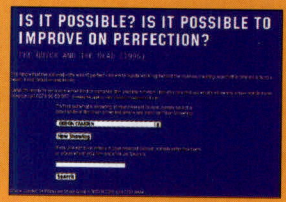
ONLINE FILM FINDERS

Use the Net to find out what, where, when – and maybe even why



ABC

www.abccinemas.co.uk
Claims to get the info you need like 'greased lightning'. We don't know about that but we've no complaints about the speed of the cinema chain giant's film finder.

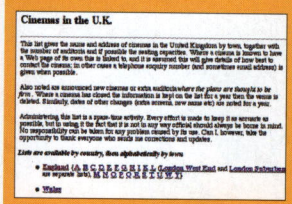


ODEON

www.odeon.co.uk
Was undergoing a major redesign when we dropped by, offering just a bare bones film finder. Lots more is promised soon and it will also offer online booking.

SHOWCASE CINEMAS

www.showcasecinemas.co.uk
The people who offer cinematic luxury (rocking recliners, cup holders armrests...) provide a simple but effective film finder for their cinemas.

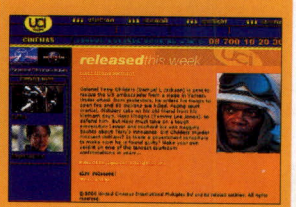


CINEMAS IN THE UK

users.aber.ac.uk/jwp/cinemas/
This site won't tell you what's showing, but it does list the addresses and phone numbers of every cinema in the UK.

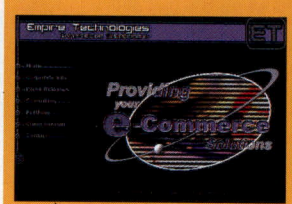
PICTURE HOUSE

www.picturehouse-cinemas.co.uk/doy/index.html
Arthouse fans will no doubt already have this bookmarked. The site features listings for independent cinemas owned by City Screen Limited.



UCI

www.uci-cinemas.co.uk
UCIs don't exactly merge into the landscape but if you don't know where your nearest one is, this is the place to find out. Tells you what's showing and provides a plot summary.

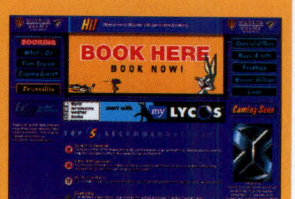


EMPIRE ONLINE

www.empireonline.co.uk
The mighty Empire has joined forces with purple-headed wonder Scoot for its no-frills Cinema Guide. Also find Scoot's cinema service at ***www.scoot.co.uk***

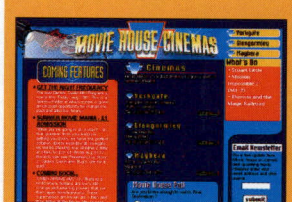
POPCORN

www.popcorn.co.uk
Feature-packed film site – find where the film you want is showing, or read a review just in case you're still undecided. After all, going to the pictures ain't cheap these days.



WARNER VILLAGE

www.warnervillage.co.uk
You can personalise the site for ease of use or just dip into its film finder as and when. One of the few to offer online booking.

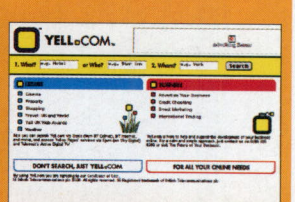


MOVIE HOUSE CINEMAS

www.moviehouse.co.uk
Movie House only has three cinemas and they're all in Ireland – find out what's showing at them here. By the way, all seats before 6pm are a bargain £2.75.

SCREEN CINEMAS

www.screencinemas.co.uk
Offers a seating plan so you can find the seat as well as film of your choice and then pick up the phone to book.



YELL

www.yell.co.uk
Fast and efficient at finding a cinema, and also provides plot summary and links, plus of course handy information like the nearest restaurant and how to get there.

WORDS: CATHERINE HANLEY; PICTURES: ONLINE USA

WORDS: LOLA BROWN; PICTURES: STEVE ORINO, BBC, CORBIS, PA, KOBAL. THANKS VOLVO FOR THE V70 ESTATE CAR. MORE DETAILS OF WHICH CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.VOLVOCARS.CO.UK

THE BEST YEARS OF YOUR LIFE

SAY GOODBYE TO THE OLD GIRL, PIN UP A FEW POSTERS AND GET READY FOR STUDENT LIFE – BAKED BEANS, CHEAP BEER, ESSAYS... AND THE NET

AS YOUR FIRST TERM AT UNIVERSITY begins, it's all too easy to be overwhelmed by the legions of unwashed third-years, hairy lecturers and subsidised drinking societies fighting for your attention. But don't be alarmed – the Internet can take the place of the loving arms of mummy and daddy. And, with a little surfing, you can learn about student life before setting foot on campus.

As a potential graduate, you're a spender of tomorrow – which means there are plenty of commercial Web sites desperate to get their hands on you. Elsewhere, students have set up their own sites, purely to provide entertainment for their fellow loafers; and there are also tons of pages offering practical advice to get you through your first semester.

But don't waste valuable drinking hours trawling through them all – just read on for the prime cuts of student life online...

THE STUDENT SITES

Sites set up for students by students might sometimes be shoddy, but they can succeed in giving 'the kids' what they want where many commercial sites fail. Student Union sites are a good way of getting the skinny on your future place of study. Less stuffy than the official university sites, Student Union pages are usually put together by sabbatical officers (students elected to run the Union for a year – thus further delaying their entry into the real world), so they're more in touch with the nitty-gritty of campus life.

Visiting a Student Union site will tell you anything from what entertainment the Union provides to a Webcam showing the local weather (like the one at Manchester Metropolitan – grey and raining). A link to all Student Union Web sites can be found at ***www.stu.uea.ac.uk/info/uksu.html***.

Even better than the Student Union sites are those set up by the Student Rag (the paramilitary fundraising arms of Student Unions), as frequently there is no censorship of their content. If you give a damn about the state of student politics in Britain (clue: the NUS are puppets of the Labour Party, and no

FREE PCS FOR LOAFERS!

Universities may promise Net access for every student, but in reality that means waiting in line as some long-haired postgrad logs on for the nightly Computer Studies *Quake* tournament. Now you can log on in the comfort of your own dorm with Bigbluespot.com, which is promising a free PC for every student! You'll have to complete a questionnaire, stump up a refundable £85 bond and promise to check your email account every week, but in return they'll deliver a computer to your door. Okay, it won't be the highest-specced machine on the planet, but what have you got to lose? Check out ***www.bigbluespot.com*** for more details.

The Blairs' 2000 holiday snap was an obvious statement

one cares anymore), check out The London Student Web site (***londonstudent.org.uk***). Love it or hate it, it provides a unique insight into the seedy world of undergraduate life.

As for personal student homepages, for every gem worth checking out there must be a hundred dedicated to *Blackadder* or Seven of Nine. Have a laugh at the Student Grant types found at ***www.cf.ac.uk/suon/bellringing/main.html***, a site dedicated to Cardiff University's bell-ringing society, written in the style of *The Fast Show*. These 'hilarious' japesters want to tell you all about their bell-ringing, but, in reality, all they seem to talk about is drinking beer – just like any other University society... except MuslimSoc, of course.

University club and society sites will provide you with a glimpse of the social perks available to new students. You'll probably find these pages tacked onto the Student Union sites, but a few particularly odd ones worth a glance are the Flying Teapots Circus Society (***www.shef.ac.uk/uni/union/susoc/ftc***) and the Bristol University Ballroom Dancing Society (***www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Union/Ballroom-dancing/hello.html***) – which is apparently the biggest society there. And if geek-orientated pastimes are not what you envisaged when you were swotting for those A-Levels, don't worry – there are plenty of cooler societies around (cannabis, DJs, debating forums...); they just generally don't bother setting up a homepage.

Cardiff's bell-ringing society: 'hilarious', obviously

Everyone loves receiving text messages – preferably during a lecture

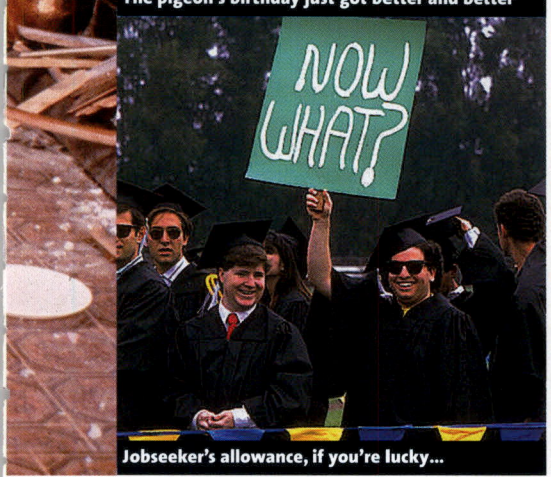
MEET THE PROS

Ever since Studentnet, a site set up by a bunch of undergrads at Nottingham University, was allegedly floated for much moolah on the stock market, commercial student sites have been cropping up everywhere. But in the rush to get something online – or perhaps register student-related Web addresses – many of these sites remain caught somewhere between concept and realisation.

StudentWorld (***www.studentworld.co.uk***) is the commercial site that grew from the hugely popular Studentnet. It's informative – but also terminally dull. It has channels to give you information on all (serious) aspects of student life and could prove useful in deciding on a course and finding out about the area you're moving to. There are also entertainment, shopping and study channels, but these are similar to what the other sites offer, with little humour or life attached.

E-Loft (***www.e-loft.com***) is the most money-hungry site of them all, and it confidently predicts that it will wipe all other student sites from the European market. But, after a much-delayed launch, the initial site is

The pigeon's birthday just got better and better



Jobseeker's allowance, if you're lucky...

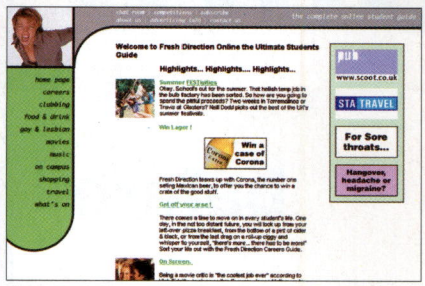
disappointing. Uninspiring editorial is poorly presented: the text is too small and there's little punctuation. There is also a database of articles telling you 'How 2' do anything, from being a DJ to being a friend (oh yes, there's plenty of cheese on this site). It would do well to ditch the staff photos, as they may scare those with a delicate disposition. E-Loft's saving grace, however, is that it allows you to send text messages to your mates' mobile phones from the homepage. This is a masterstroke, as everyone loves receiving messages – preferably during a lecture.

If you don't already own a mobile, check out ***www.studentmobiles.com*** for the best deals around. Once you get to college, you'll soon realise how essential a mobile is, as many of the payphones found in halls of residence are too expensive to actually use (that's when they're working at all).

Freshers might like to see how much their life mirrors that of Dan Spank, a first-year design student who will be putting his fictional daily diary online at ***www.danspank.com***. Follow his love life, vote on who he should date and pick up tips on how to mix partying, cooking and studying.

GETTING YOUR KICKS IN...

Where to go and what to do in eight of Britain's top student destinations



LONDON

Having a whale of a time in the Smoke has never been easier for students: ***www.freshdirection.co.uk*** lists everything from student club nights to gay and lesbian listings. There are also competitions and articles to keep you amused. ***www.timeout.com/studentmag*** also offers information.

BRIGHTON

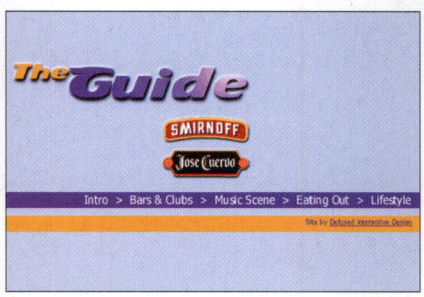
There's tons on offer for culture vultures, clubbers, shoppers and just about everyone at ***www.brighton.co.uk***, with links to more specific Brighton sites. Besides checking out what's going down, you can get weather reports and read about local celebs.

EDINBURGH

Get the skinny on everything to do in the daytime, night-time and morning after from ***www.edstudent.com***. The site includes ratings of all the local chippies and very handy insider information. You can also print off special promo vouchers for local nightclubs – fantastic!

MANCHESTER

A perfect site to introduce you the city is ***www.manchester.com***. Besides its informative student pages – including a guide to queer Manchester and a local gig guide with the lowdown on venues – there's an interactive tour offering chat, accommodation, jobs and a singles club.



LIVERPOOL

Soon to be re-named 'Livercool' according to ***www.liverpool-guide.co.uk***, and seen by many to be as culturally hip as Paris (hmm...). This site has links to pretty much everywhere you will want to spend your time.

HULL

A rocking student town! Visit ***www.thisishull.co.uk*** and check out the Student Guide section for listings of pubs, clubs and just about everything else Hull has to offer. Many of the advertisers have money-off vouchers.

BIRMINGHAM

Brum is home to more than 60,000 students. Find out where they work, rest and play at the Student Life section of ***www.birmingham.gov.uk***.

BELFAST

Links and listings can be found on the ***www.belfast.net*** Student Pages. The site offers a drink of the week and a 'What's On' directory. There's also a student discount database.

Get yours

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Another commercial site that manages to entertain is ***www.studentuk.com***. Colourful graphics and easy navigation have made it a hit. Especially cool is the chat room, which always seems to be lively. StudentUK even has its own soap opera – rather bizzarely animated with real peoples' faces – offers free email and has lots of really useful study advice, including words of wisdom from somebody who actually achieved a first.

Redmole (***www.redmole.co.uk***) is the funkiest commercial site for students. It seems more in touch with its audience – and doesn't patronise like so many other commercial sites. If you still haven't chosen a university, check out the Alternative University Rankings, as voted for by students. According to these ratings, when asked 'Knowing what you know now, would you have chosen to come to this university?', only 17 percent of Liverpool's John Moores University students said 'yes'.

Daft exam tip: 'a flatulent exam candidate is an unpopular exam candidate'

The site has other interesting aspects, including daft exam tips ('a flatulent exam candidate is an unpopular exam candidate'), links to online student magazines and newspapers and the Redmole Exchange. This is a noticeboard for you to get in touch with fellow students and plead for help on anything – from writing an essay to advice on accommodation. If you want advice from students (on a site that's easily navigated), not from businessmen, this is the place to go.

WHO NEEDS LIBRARIES?

Now you've secured your place at uni, can the Net help with your studies? It's a subject that many college tutors are divided on. On one hand, the Web opens up a whole world of information from which students can glean up-to-date research; on the other hand, it makes it incredibly easy to cut and paste together whole essays. But if you are going to use the Internet as a legitimate research tool, there are plenty of sites that can help you...

One of your tutors may ask you to keep a scrapbook of news articles relevant to your course. You can begin with a sift through the online press. *The Guardian* (***www.guardianunlimited.co.uk***) has recently improved its search engine; *The Telegraph* (***www.telegraph.co.uk***) has been brilliant for resourcing articles since its launch; and the *Financial Times* (***www.ft.com***) and *Independent* (***www.independent.co.uk***) aren't too bad either.

Poisoning lecturers is bad

Many newspapers have student spin-offs, including the *Independent* (which has strong associations with UCAS) and the *Telegraph*. The latter's offering, *Juiced* (***www.juiced.co.uk***), is by far the most interesting: it gathers together the best student stories from all over the country. *Juiced* also has great competitions every term, where you can win everything from festival tickets to much-needed cash.

Researching journals online has many advantages over trying to find articles in the library. The Net is much faster; and it's a well-known fact at uni that paper documents are never in the right place. BIDS is the most widely known Internet research tool, used by lecturers and students alike. It enables you to search through the contents of 2,500 titles on a wide range of disciplines. This service can be accessed via Freeserve's student portal (***www.freeserve.com/learning/highered***), but you'll need to get a password to use the system. This can be obtained from your university, provided it subscribes to the service (most educational institutions do).

BIDS will give you information on where the articles can be found for free and, if you don't mind paying, you can access them through the site's Ingenta Journals Service. Your plastic will also get you access to Northernlight (***www.northernlight.com***), which is fairly easy to navigate and has 20 million

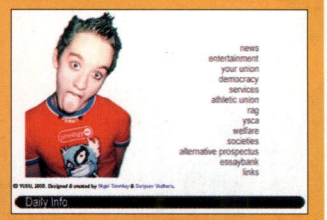
CHEAT YOUR WAY TO A FIRST!

Blagging your way through university is hardly a new phenomenon, but the Internet has made plagiarism a way of life for today's student. These days, it's easy to avoid the headache of actually doing any research and writing any essays – therefore freeing up more time for drinking snakebite and dancing to Chumbawumba down the Union.

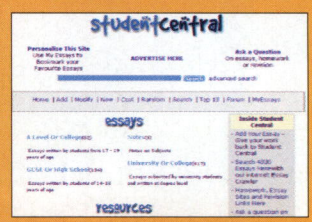
There are two types of sites that make it easy for you to cheat: altruistic ones that post essays to help students out, and ones that offer answers – at a price. As you can imagine, there are tons more of the swipe-your-card-for-grades variety.

But be careful – lecturers are getting wise, even inventing programmes to catch cheats. At Glasgow, Dr Rob Irving ran his super-spy software over 230 of his first-year students' coursework and caught 59 cheaters. The lesson to be learnt here is that it's easier to hoodwink a sociology lecturer than a computing professor.

Of course, if you've handed in absolute tosh all term then suddenly turn in a perfect essay, suspicions may be aroused. Your lecturers also have access to the Internet and can see exactly what's available online. Even if you pay for an essay, there's no guarantee it will be up to scratch – at the very least, run a spell-check and read it through to remove any Americanisms.

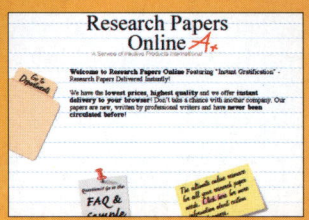


YORK UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION
www.york.ac.uk/student/su
Check out the essay bank to use York University students' work.



STUDENT CENTRAL
www.studentcentral.co.uk
A wide range of subject categories and essays for free. Handily tells you what college they were originally submitted at.

CHEATHOUSE
www.cheathouse.com
The evil house of Cheat has 9,500 essays on its database for you to fleece, for free!



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Promises new papers, written by professionals, that have never been circulated before, at $4.50 per page.

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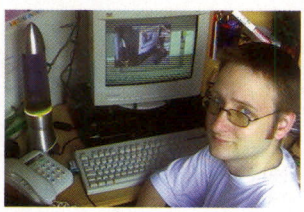
Has pre-written reports on hundreds of topics for $7.50 a page (roughly a fiver), and will custom write for you at $22-35 per page.

THE STUDENT HOUSE

What really goes on in the hovels students call 'home'? Time for some Webcam action...



If you really want to see what student life is all about, then there's one site that gives you a true taste: ***www.studenthouse.net***, where four students put their lives online via live Webcams. After a year off, the house returns this September. Pat Cornwell (above), the brains of the operation, tells all...

Who's in the student house this year?

It will consist of Steph, Tina, Chris, and myself – all final-year computing students.

How do your mates react in front of the cameras?

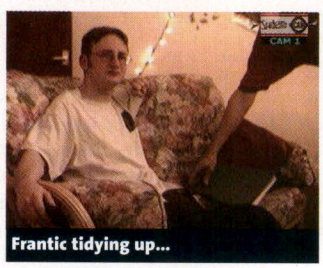
When we ran it last year, nearly everyone who visited knew what the cameras were there for. Instead of either playing up or hiding, they generally got completely used to them and, after a while, pretty much forgot they were there. We received a tremendous amount of feedback in the 10 months we ran last time – most of it positive. We did had people trying to damage the site by filling up the guestbooks, flooding our email and hammering the server, but we were clued up enough to filter out such characters.

Any cyberstalkers or lunatics actually arriving at the house?

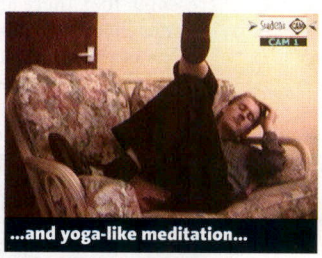
We took every precaution to never give away the location of the house, so no one ever turned up unexpectedly at the front door. However, one of the residents from the first Student House is now living with a French girl who met him through the site – so in some ways I suppose she could come under 'stalker'.

What's the wildest stuff that happened?

I remember a couple of friends coming over (boyfriend and girlfriend), and I was discussing with them ways to help promote the site – having just recently discovered that 'tits means hits.' So the girl decided she'd do a few seductive topless shots with her bloke and one of the guys living in the house, in a kind of 'we have threesomes all the time' way. The banner was a fantastic success for the whole day it ran... until it got round uni and I received polite threats to get rid of it. Other than that, just the odd accidental arse cheek fresh from the shower.



Frantic tidying up...



...and yoga-like meditation...

...preceded the visit of the nit nurse

Any wild parties ever happen in front of the camera?

We're computer students, remember! We had parties, but we were never caught doing live projectile vomiting. Perhaps this year we might go off the rails.

What equipment would students need to invest if they wanted to emulate what you do?

If they did it from scratch and bought the cheapest solution, probably about £1000, plus an ongoing charge for however they were delivering it (phoneline/ADSL/cable). Oh, and lots of unpaid Web design. In terms of how long it would take, probably just a couple of hours to get the pictures onto the Web.

articles from journals, newspapers and other documents. You can download them in their entirety for a few US dollars, or check out the abstracts for free. Another place to offer this service is ***www.catchword.com***, although it's more expensive.

LIFE SUPPORT

For the totally clueless student, there are sites out there to help you cope with everything the real world is going to throw at you. Whether you need to learn how to organise your life – or simply get one – you can find inspiration online.

Using the Net can help you find a place to live before you arrive at your soon-to-be hometown. Check out the Student Union or university sites to see if they have accommodation listings. Another useful site is ***www.studentaccommodation.com***, which allows you to search through a database of rooms, flats and houses by area and price. It's easy to use and is getting increasingly popular as the new term approaches.

The time-honoured ostrich egg race

Despite what some undergraduates say, eating is essential; and unless you want to blow your loan (and intestinal health) on Pot Noodles, you'd better learn to cook. Visit ***www.helpineedto.co.uk*** and find a panel of ex-students willing to share recipes for such culinary delights as tinned food casserole: 'fruit and veg rot quickly, and are too much hassle to cook.' There are also recipes for student standards like cottage pie, stir-fry and macaroni cheese, plus tips on everything from making bad wine drinkable to rolling your own... cigarettes, of course. Check out their dancing tips, too.

If your level of culinary expertise exceeds the heating up of food found in Tesco's 'Value' range (possibly the greatest aid to University life of the past 10 years), or if you simply want to impress a fellow fresher, try these more sophisticated sites: Simplyfood (***www.simplyfood.co.uk***) has a fantastic recipe search engine, based on what's already in your fridge. Enter 'baked beans' and it'll find five options on what to do with your pauper ingredients. Admittedly it might cost a bit to equip your kitchen with everything needed to make gnocchi verdi, but the mini pizzas are a breeze. Foodoo (***www.foodoo.com***) is another great site for suave first-years, with recipes from celebrity chefs Ken Hom, Gary Rhodes and Sophie Grigson.

Travel is another essential part of student life (well... tell that to your parents so they'll shell out for you to trek through Peru in your summer break). And being a student also means discounted travel! STA (***www.statravel.co.uk***) has a wicked site to help you plan an extensive tour of south-east Asia. It offers a flight-finder service and a selection of tours and accommodation. On top of these essential services, it offers competitions, a noticeboard for finding travelling companions and two real-life student travel diaries.

The cheat-note handshake – always a good device

The main competitor to STA is Usit Campus (***www.usitcampus.co.uk***), offering similar rates and services to students. It's not such a cool site and is far too slow to load, but it does have last-minute deals and in-depth reviews of far-flung destinations.

When not planning your holiday, you might have to study – but buying every tome on your reading list is a costly business. Let your credit card order all you need online (and if you don't have some plastic yet, you soon will, as the banks throw credit at you when you get to university). The site offering the biggest discounts on textbooks is ***www.StudentBookWorld.com*** (up to 30 percent off). There are over 1.2 million books listed in their search engine. Register at the site and you could win £300 worth of books.

Whether you need to organise your life – or get one – you can find inspiration online

Blackwells academic bookshops are to be found on many campuses across the country, but you can buy online too (***bookshop.blackwell.co.uk***). They offer free postage and packing anywhere in the UK; and lecturers can post reading lists on site, giving more competitive students a head start.

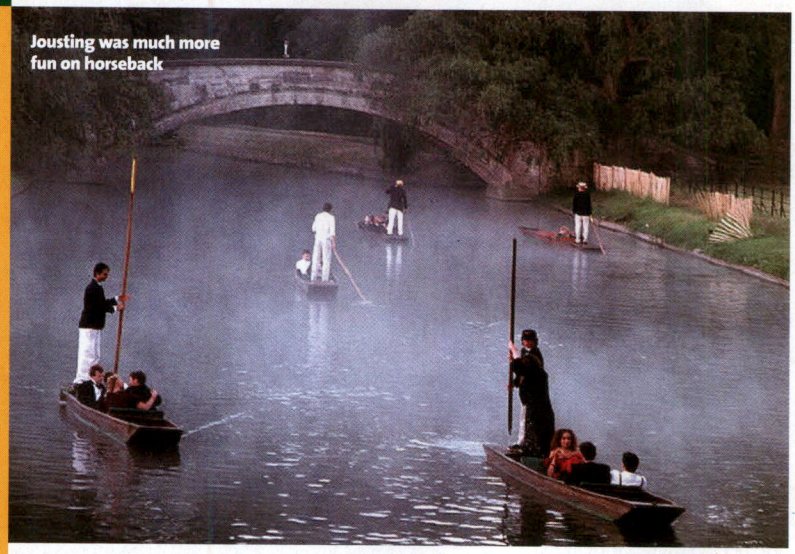
Finally, if you get to university and find that you absolutely hate it, miss your mum/girl- or boyfriend/dog, and want to kill your flatmates, the Internet is there to hold your hand. Visit ***www.depressionalliance.com*** (the United Kingdom's leading self-help organisation for people suffering from depression) for their 'Student Stress Survival pack', advising on everything from homesickness to academic issues. Many Student Union Web sites also have advice pages – the Royal Holloway University of London and Cambridge University sites are particularly helpful. And if things really are reaching breaking point, you can contact the Samaritans online (***www.samaritans.org***) to either find out where your nearest branch is or seek advice via email. Happy studying!

OXBRIDGE FELLOWS

What is it about Oxford and Cambridge? Not content with only accepting students with two brains and the right accent, the Universities are also riddled with bizarre institutions, toff sports and arcane rituals. So if you're off to the cream of Britain's educational establishments, here's a taste of what's in store...

Unlike their contemporaries in the redbricks, Oxbridge students spurn cheap lager and the launderette for their evening thrills. Instead, they're off debating. Check out ***www.cus.org*** and ***www.oxford-union.org*** to see what our future political leaders will be gas-bagging on about this term. Other 'leisure' activities on offer include a Gilbert and Sullivan Society (***users.ox.ac.uk/~gands***), the Arthurian Society at ***users.ox.ac.uk/~arthsoc*** and a Cambridge society where everyone gets to act like Boy Scouts (***www.cam.ac.uk/societies/cusagc***).

Of course, more strenuous activity is also on offer. Why not try out for the Boat Race? Read about last year's event at ***www.regatta.rowing.org.uk/BoatRace*** and find out how much muscle you'll need to be packing – last year's Oxford crew were an average 6ft3in tall. Maybe it's better for students among the dreaming spires to stick to punting: visit Scudamores (***www.scudamores.co.uk/Punting.html***) for more information.



Jousting was much more fun on horseback

Keyboard £54.99

No mice or cables required – but you do need batteries (not included) to run this Digital Edge infra-red keyboard. It claims to give 'instant' Net access. Free overnight delivery if you spend £30+. ***www.viking-direct.co.uk***

RETAIL THERAPY

Fancy a bit of DIY, or rather be playing your guitar? Our monthly shop caters for it all...

Hot sauces from £3.35

A whole site dedicated to the hottest pepper sauces from around the world – wonderful! Delivery is £2.49 whatever quantity you buy; orders are despatched the next day. ***www.pepperama.co.uk***

Magic tricks £3.99 & £15.50

Turn blank paper into £10 notes with the Money Maker (£3.99), and seemingly slice your finger off with the Finger Guillotine (£15.50). Amaze friends with your transmogrification into Paul Daniels. Delivery is free and orders are despatched in 24 hours. Magic. ***www.magictricks.co.uk***

Fern sander £9.99

A 'detail' sander from Screwfix – the DIYer's nirvana which offers next-day delivery (£4.25 carriage). ***www.screwfix.com***

TFG sportswear £40 & £20

Urban sports chic from TFG: packable jacket £40 and Johnny T-shirt (£20). Delivery is free; allow three days ***www.tfgsports.com***

Nike basketball shoes $159.99

These Air Flight Posite 'jump socks' should bring out the Michael Jordan in the most leaden-footed hoops player. A quest for these desirable boots took us to US site East Bay, where a hefty $31 shipping charge took the shine off the purchase. ***www.eastbay.com***

Cosmetics £40 & £8

Scented candles for men? You're having a laugh. But no – get in touch with your feminine side at BeautySpy. We indulged in a pomegranate candle (£8) and razor set (£40). Delivery is £3 on goods over £50; allow four days.
www.beautyspy.co.uk

Fender guitar £699

Go on, treat yourself – you can't play air guitar all your life. Now we know you need to hold and caress a Fender Mexican Thinline Telecaster before buying, but if you don't live near a guitar shop, buy online here. Delivery is free over £200, and orders usually go out in 24 hours.
www.chandlerguitars.co.uk

GPS £129

Never know where you are? Then get yourself one of these new-fangled Global Positioning Systems (GPS) hand-helds. Free next-day delivery on orders over £50. ***www.adventureshop.co.uk***

THE NET'S TOP TIPS FOR ONLINE SHOPPING

Keep to our simple guidelines, and there's no reason why online shopping should end in a puddle of tears

■ **CHECK THE SITE IS SECURE** A small padlock will appear in the bottom left of your browser to show that you can safely send credit card details through the site. Your Web browser will also tell you whether a site is secure or not when you enter it.

■ **SHOP WITH BRAND-NAME COMPANIES** As with any shopping, you're better off with a company you've actually heard of.

■ **CHECK DELIVERY TIMES AND CHARGES** Companies should tell you the delivery charge if there is one on their site. If you live in the Highlands and Islands or Ireland, you may find that free delivery does not apply.

■ **NEVER SEND ANYTHING BY EMAIL** If a site asks for card details by email, don't oblige. It's far, far easier for emails to be intercepted.

■ **PRINT THE CONTRACT** This is the only permanent record of your purchase, so make sure you keep it, along with your order number and other details. Don't forget: if it's a UK site, you have the same consumer rights as you do in the High Street.

■ **IF IT GOES WRONG, DON'T WORRY** Contrary to scare stories, online shopping is safer and very often cheaper than traditional methods – and it's in the online store's interest to sort any problems out quickly.

PHOTOGRAPHY: NICK WRIGHT

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What Website?

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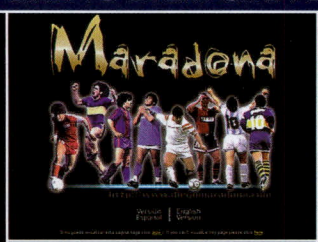
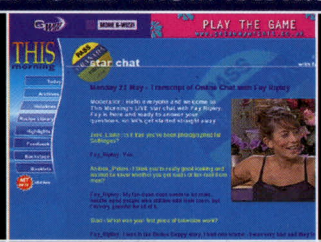
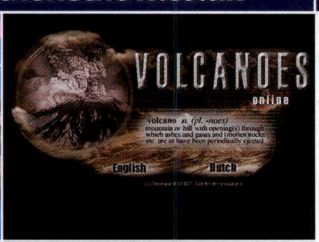
LINK TO EVERY SITE FEATURED FROM *www.thenetnow.co.uk*



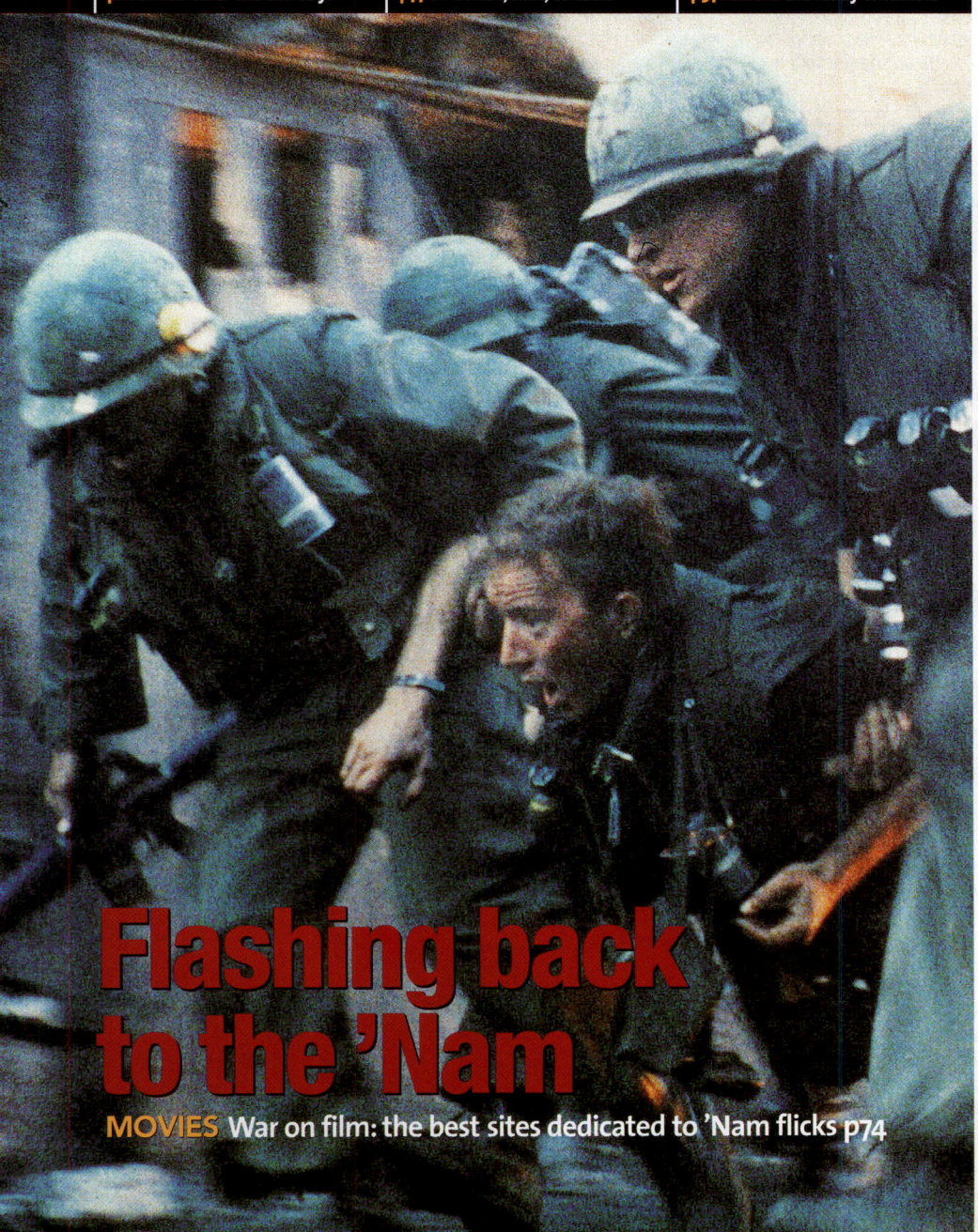
p81 SPORT Meet the bad boys



p77 TV Coffee, chat, celebs...



p97 Science Get ready to rumble



Flashing back to the 'Nam

MOVIES War on film: the best sites dedicated to 'Nam flicks p74

PICTURE: KOBAL COLLECTION

OCTOBER 2000

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Beatlemania online

MOVIES 75
Paint it black: top 'Nam films

TELEVISION 77
Chit-chat of a higher calibre

CELEBRITIES 78
If you can't join 'em, buy their stuff

SPORT REFEREES 79
We salute the good...

SPORT ANTI-HEROES 81
...the bad, and the ugly

HEALTH 85
Freeze yourself! Live forever!

TRAVEL 86
Must-see sites for fiancés

FOOD 89
Veggie-hopping for hungry bunnies

LEARNING & HISTORY 91
Faux pas fixits; dust-biting species

GAMES 93
Plan, pillage, protect: strategy games

CARS 94
Avoid a bad buy with our site selection

MONEY 95
Unleash your entrepreneurial skills

SCIENCE 97
Big, exploding mountains

WEIRD 97
Create your own universe online

ANIMALS 98
Show Fido who's boss

KIDS 99
Give the little 'uns the gift of reading

HOMES & GARDENS 100
Surf before you saw: top DIY sites

STYLE AND FASHION 103
Find your fragrance online

NEED TO KNOW 105
Sites for the savviest of surfers

BEATLES

Magical mystery tours

The number of Fab Four Web sites proves that the moptops inspired more than just Noel Gallagher

Life: The Beatles

www.lifemag.com/Life/thebeatles

★★★★

Magazines *Time* and *Life* are an institution in the US; this reserved, attractive treatment of their Beatles coverage is a welcome break from the multimedia mania elsewhere on the Web. Several thoughtful, high-quality photos (in a well-designed gallery) complement intelligent

A day in the *Life* magazine

commentary, essays and archive articles. And if that's all a bit mundane, there's a quiz and a Name That Tune jukebox, too.

Abbey Road Studios

www.abbeyroad.co.uk ★★★★

The groundbreaking work the staff at Abbey Road put in while recording the vast majority of the Beatles' output was well worth it; the Fabs named their last album after the dusty North London studio, instantly making it the most famous in the world – and one of the most expensive. This colourful pop-up site shows you the interior of the premises in 360-degree style, so you can decide whether you want to pay through the nose for the NW8 studio – or just stand outside and take your picture on the Zebra crossing for nowt.

Beatles Index

macul.ciencias.uchile.cl/~vmunoz

★★★

Chilean Victor Muñoz is obviously a patient man to compile this site, which can tell you what Beatles anniversaries to celebrate for any given day of the year. There's also a huge discography and a Beatles Internet search engine. Vic's given his site a very apt title, for it's a bit like the index in a book: useful for reference but not exactly a riveting read straight through.

Beatles Beatles Beatles

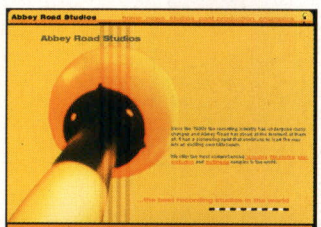
members.tripod.com/~taz4158/pepper.html ★★★★

Huge, haphazard resource centre. Slung together in apparently random and not particularly attractive fashion, the site contains hours of reading material in its 20 or so text sections (including John Lennon's will). When the wordage overpowers you, take a break with a similar number of streaming video and audio clips – interestingly, often of unreleased songs.

Beatlezone

www.beatlezone.com ★★★

There are thousands of Beatle sites out there, a disturbing number of which call themselves Pepperland, so what you need when you're looking for something specific is a Yahoo-style directory which breaks down the sites available by subject matter and category. Luckily for you, Beatlezone does just that, in lawyer-worryingly similar style to Yahoo. So now you can head straight to the Ringo shrine.



Abbey Road Studios: abbeyroad.co.uk

Beatlezone breaks down Beatles sites by subject matter and category

BEST MUSIC SITES ★★★★★

where can I?

FIND A BAND SITE?

www.ubl.com Check here first – the search engine is huge!

www.bigmouth.co.uk

UK-specific site with tons of links.

www.musicsearch.com

Find artist sites or music services.

wallofsound.go.com

Links and features from the US.

READ THE LATEST NEWS AND REVIEWS?

www.rollingstone.com Established US mag with extra content.

www.nme.com The online version has a reputation for breaking news.

www.qonline.co.uk Essential Web version of the popular magazine.

www.spin.com Online rendering of the hip US mag.

FIND GIGS AND TOURS?

www.ticketlinks.com Full database of musical events.

www.sceneone.co.uk Easy to use entertainment portal.

www.wayahead.com Reliable and competitively-priced ticket service .

BUY NEW CDS?

www.yalplay.com

Popular CD and video store.

www.audiostreet.com

A cheap and easy-to-navigate store.

www.boxman.co.uk

Competitive and easy on the eye.

www.othermusic.com New York City-based store specialising in underground sounds.

Hard-to-find disks at othermusic.com

FIND OUT ABOUT MP3s?

www.mp3now.com A good MP3 portal now in the UK.

mp3.lycos.com

Browse the world of MP3s.

www.mp3.com Heaps of downloads.

POST MY BAND'S MP3s?

www.crunch.co.uk Signs artists exclusively for the site.

www.peoplesound.com A popular unsigned band portal.

www.vitaminic.co.uk New MP3 site.

www.clickmusic.co.uk Excellent MP3 portal with downloads.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

Keep an eye out for rare Beatles outtakes at ***rec.music.beatles***.

WATCH BANDS ONLINE?

Visit ***www.virtuetv.com*** for details of new RealVideo live shows.

GET CHATTING?

www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Balcony/1969 Beatle fans unite!

THE NET'S FAVOURITE

The Beatles Ultimate Experience

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Frontrow/4853 /main menu.html ★★★★★

A heady title, but TBUE has been independently voted top historical Beatles Web site. The humungous amount of content has been cleverly arranged chronologically, enabling you to zoom in on an era. The thousands of contemporary and retrospective quotes from, and pictures of, the foursome make up the backbone of the site but there's also an interviews, a query-answering service, e-postcards...

'Could you turn the clothes down, boys'

'Sing along! "Helter Skelter, la-la-la-la-la-la-la'"

WORDS: GARY PARKINSON; PICTURES: REX

BEATLES

Beatle Money

www.fortunecity.com/tinpan/manicstreet/526 ★★★

When the moptops received MBEs in 1965, the colonels spluttered with rage and returned their medals – but canny PM Harold Wilson quite correctly pointed out how much the band had done for the export industry. At Beatle Money you can find a tremendous amount of detail about the fabs' fascinating finances. Weep as you discover how Ringo got his £350 drums for free. Typical.

Dana Pannell's Beatles Karaoke

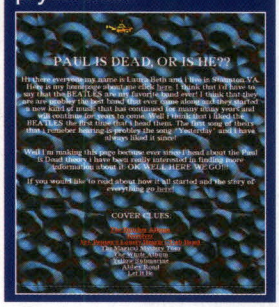
wsp3.wspice.com/~dpannell/beatles ★★★

The effortless pop songs the Beatles wrote made them the singalong kings – and they've become karaoke standards; bars from Tenerife to Totnes tremble as amateur warblers croon along to *Yesterday*. Now you can do it at home (or, even better, in the office) because Dana Pannell has jotted down the lyrics and created cheesy MIDI versions of every song the Beatles did. Including *Flying*, which was an instrumental. Cheers, Dana.

BA (HONS) BEATLISM

Be a Beatle boffin

Know your (glass) onions when it comes to the Beatles? You could always get a degree in Beatleology. Indiana University does a course (***www.music.indiana.edu/som/courses/rock/beatles.html***) all about the moptops, examining an album per week and culminating in a month's trip to London – entirely academic, of course. (Interestingly enough, only a weekend is spent in the somewhat less touristic Liverpool). Dr Glenn Gass has also tracked down lots of photoshoot locations so you can pretend to be fab. The site helpfully points out that London is 'Ideally located for travel to France, Scotland, Ireland and the continent'; try getting Mom and Pop to pay for *that*.



Paul is Dead

www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Stadium/1869 ★★★

In 1969, a curious rumour arose that Paul McCartney had died three years earlier in a car crash and had secretly been replaced by a lookalike. Conspiracy theorists claim that the Beatles had left 'hints' in their subsequent lyrics and on album covers so true fans would know. All kinds of spurious 'evidence' was unearthed to support the theory; hundreds of clues are collated on this apparently earnest (and therefore hilarious) site.

The Spanish Beatles Page

www.upv.es/~ecabrera ★★★★★

Not a dodgy Barcelonian tribute band (sadly, perhaps), but an impressive and attractive fan page which you can read in either English or Español. There's a trivia game, pictures of Penny Lane and quite enough biographical detail on each song, but this site's strongest hand is the multimedia archive: you can download video files, install screensavers and desktop themes on your PC or just flick through the many pictures.

The boys always saw the Beatles Cruises off

VIETNAM

Charlie don't surf!

From Da Nang to the DMZ, here's our pick of Vietnam War movie Web sites

Hamburger Hill Home Page

www.historyinfilm.com/hamhill/index.htm ★★★★

The film of the 101st Airborne Division's fight for 'Hamburger' Hill in 1969 is based on real events, as brought home by the History in Film Web site. Click between the movie's storyline and the chronology of the battle itself, although there's no attempt to look at events from the Vietnamese point of view. That said, it's a clever approach, and is applied to other films – such as *Saving Private Ryan* – on the site.

The Deer Hunter

w3.gwis.com/~dml/tdh ★★★

'One of the greatest movies ever made,' says Webmaster David Landers. 'Overblown, melodramatic tripe,' says *the net*. If you disagree with us, you'll find plenty of friends among the hundreds of *Deer Hunter* bores busily posting to the message-board. Don't forget the trivia: apparently Christopher Walken expressed his character's mental illness by drawing on memories of being packed off to camp as a boy. Fascinating. No, really.

Platoon

www.moviemania.branden.net/platoon.htm ★★

One of those 'Nam flicks you either love or hate. Gritty, no-holds-barred look at infantry combat, or yet another slice of Oliver Stone bombast with a few decent tunes chucked in? Play back the audio clips and swot up on *Platoon* 'facts' (Keith Richards allegedly played one of the

Oxford and Cambridge were ready for anything

grizzled vets Charlie Sheen meets at the airbase) before you decide.

Born on the Fourth of July

www.geocities.com/Hollywood/2682/born4th.htm ★★

The second of Stone's Vietnam trilogy, and by far the best. The politics are heartfelt and there's a knockout performance from the Cruiser – but this tribute is let down by too many dead links. Fans might like to browse the official Olly Stone site ('Writer. Director. Thinker.') at ***www.oliverstone.com***.

Full Metal Jacket

www.alta.demon.co.uk/amk ★★★

Few directors have inspired as many Web pages as Stanley Kubrick and although there's no single outstanding *FMJ* site, this collection of material about his movies contains some great stuff. Read the original screenplay (Private Joker gets killed!), listen in as the nerds at alt.kubrick discuss the film, and find out what a 'full metal jacket' round actually does to the human body.

Boy bands were a lot harder in the 60s

The Green Berets

chomsky.arts.adelaide.edu.au/person/DHart/Films/GreenBerets.html ★★★

In 1968, big John Wayne produced and starred in this tub-thumper in an attempt to explain Why Our Boys Are Over There. The Duke's presence ensured healthy box-office, but the film's a turkey, riddled with clichés – and it's ripped to shreds here. For example, the last scene shows the sun setting... in the east.

Southern Comfort

www.destgulch.com/movies/sc ★★

What do you mean, it's set in 70s Louisiana? Walter Hill's neglected masterpiece is *really* about the Nam: abandoned grunts in the swamps, under siege by a merciless enemy... obvious, isn't it? Check out the site, then buy Ry Cooder's fantastic soundtrack.

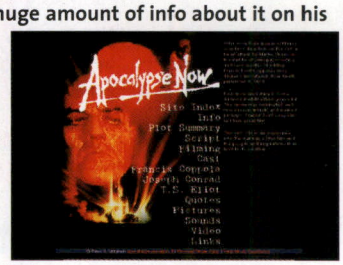
THE NET'S FAVOURITE

Apocalypse Now Tribute

film.tierranet.com/films/a.now ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

What a movie. A whole year spent filming then another nine months editing, with lead actor Martin Sheen suffering a heart attack in the middle of principal photography; the experience turned Francis Ford Coppola from the director who made *Godfather II* into the one who made *Godfather III*. *Apocalypse Now* is the ultimate Vietnam flick, and now some mad Finn has pulled together a huge amount of info about it on his sprawling site. Including three alternative endings, video and sound clips (all together now: 'I love the smell of napalm in the morning...') and the opportunity to buy the books on Colonel Kurtz's shelf, it's got everything the diehard *AN* fan could ever need.

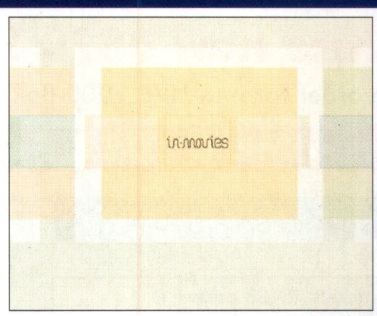


BEST MOVIE SITES ★★★★★

where can I?

GET LATEST NEWS AND RELEASE DATES?

www.popcorn.co.uk A look at all the new releases – from a Brit's point of view.
aint-it-cool-news.com Gives the inside track on new films.
www.filmunlimited.co.uk Views and news from *The Guardian*.
uk.imdb.com The online film bible – use the search engine or be lost.



DECIDE WHAT TO SEE?

cinemachine.com
Retrieves film reviews from across the Web.
www.filmreview.co.uk
A UK-based review site to rival the Americans.
www.mrqe.com Flamboyantly-titled Movie Review Query Engine with 20,000+ films.
www.movie-trailers.com Trailers for all the newest films.
www.salon.com/ent/movies
Well-written online reviews and articles.

FIND OFFICIAL FILM SITES?

www.foxmovies.com Links to 20th Century Fox releases.
www.movies.warnerbros.com Site featuring WB's new films and lost classics.
www.disney.co.uk/DisneyMovies All the kids' faves in one.

WATCH OR POST AMATEUR SHORT FILMS?

www.cinemanow.com A portal site for new films from around the world.
www.getoutthere. bt.com BT-owned amateur movie site.
www.in-movies.com Download great shorts onto your desktop.
www.urbanchillers.com Scary new horror flicks to download.
www.sightsound.com The place to see *The Quantum Project* – the first full-length, full-budget Net film.

FIND A CINEMA?

www.uci-cinemas.co.uk A great search engine to locate current film screenings across the country.
www.odeon.co.uk
To book online, or peruse the very latest information.
cinema.scoot.co.uk
From the people behind the comprehensive directory.
www.cineworld.co.uk
UK film portal that also includes a cinema finder.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.war.vietnam War. What is it good for?

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Discuss villains in film and literature. Send an email to ***www.onelist.com/community/Villainy*** to subscribe.

GET CHATTING?

buzzcom.com Get the latest word and thoughts on all the new movies before they're released over here.

WORDS: MATTHEW BINGHAM; PICTURES: KOBAL COLLECTION

Find what you want on the Web

thenet

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Plus BUY 4 TICKETS GET 1 FREE

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Sept 21-24

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thenet readers offer. ORDER FORM

TICKET DETAILS

	Number of tickets			
Thursday 21 September		adult ticket @ £8 each	£	
		child ticket @ £4 each	£	
Friday 22 September		adult ticket @ £8 each	£	
		child ticket @ £4 each	£	
Saturday 23 September		adult ticket @ £8 each	£	
		child ticket @ £4 each	£	
Sunday 24 September		adult ticket @ £8 each	£	
		child ticket @ £4 each	£	
Total free tickets claimed		Total Cost	£	

FREE TICKET (1 free ticket for every 4 purchased)*

Call the box office now on 0870 736 2000 and quote thenet readers offer or complete and return the order form to LIVE2000 Box Office, PO Box 111, London, HA9 0YH

If you do not wish to receive other information, please tick box. ☐

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I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to WTS Box Office

I wish to pay by

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Switch ☐ Amex ☐ Other Debit

Card No ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Valid from / / Expiry Date / /

Issue No (Switch only) ☐☐

Signature ..... Date .....

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Post code ..... Tel: .....

Email: .....

* Purchase four adult tickets in advance, in one transaction, all valid for the same day, and receive one ticket for the same day free.

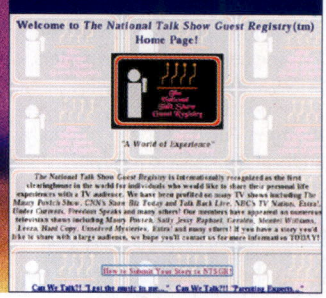
CREDIT CARD HOTLINE 0870 736 2000

'My home is handily located off the M1, Miss Norway, so if you want to stop by...'

SILENCE IS GOLDEN

Trailer trash alert

What Oprah endeavoured to distance herself from, others flock toward: the talk show. What do Sally Jessy Raphael, Montel Williams and Geraldo have in common? They've all solicited guests for their show from The National Talk Show Registry (NTSGR) in the States (*members.aol.com/ntsgr/homepage.html*). For just $32 (about £21), anyone yearning for their 15 minutes of fame can sign up and wait by the phone, fingers crossed, hoping for the chance to spill their guts and darkest secrets to millions of people. The NTSGR offers some handy tips just in case you do get called up: 'Never, NEVER, embellish your story for the sake of "being on TV"'. As if.



'Welcome to my chat-eau'

Missed your favourite star plugging their new book/record/show on TV? Catch up online...

TFI Friday

www.tfifriday.com/home.htm

★★★

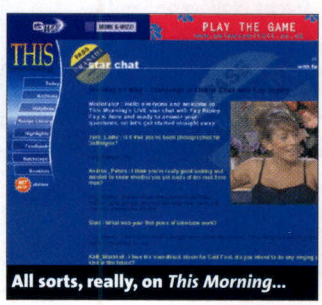
Somewhat like the British version of David Letterman, Chris Evans has managed to keep his quirky show going with a steady combination of humour, chat, music and skits. This site offers a chance to get background information on past guests, zoom in on clips from the show, buy merchandise and watch RealVideo excerpts. There's also 'wacky' icons and celeb wallpaper to download.

This Morning

www.g-wizz.net/thismorning/TMO/navigation/tm_frameset.htm

★★★

'Everybody who is anybody has appeared on the show to have a coffee and a chat with Richard and Judy', boasts this site. This may well be true, but only interviews from this year are available online, and because we visited during the off-season, the interactive bits were, well, inactive. That said, there was still much to look at: recipes, fitness tips, and tons of links on everything from pets to finance.



All sorts, really, on *This Morning*...

The Priory

www.theprioryshow.com ★★★★

Another poppy mix of music, chat and nonsense from Evans' Ginger Television, and an equally entertaining site to boot. The intro alone is fun enough to make this worth visiting, and inside you can read about past guests, watch clips of interviews, download stuff for your desktop and catch up on the latest gossip. Zoë and Jamie fans will be in heaven.

Online with Oprah

www.oprah.com ★★★

Ms Winfrey is the undisputed queen of chat in America and pioneered the 'air your dirty washing *very* publicly' format. Of late, however, she has moved from Jerry Springer-type pap to 'uplifting subjects', and this site serves as an outlet for O's various projects, such as a book club and the Angel charity. Visitors are encouraged to get involved, and can get show reports from the past two years.

PICK OF THE NET

Late Show with David Letterman

www.cbs.com/network/tvshows/mini/lateshow ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

With the hip Yanks' choice of chat host now aiming his (gap-toothed) grin at British audiences on cable, you might want to have a look at this official site to accustom yourself to Mr Letterman's antics. Most impressive is the archive of Top 10s (a permanent, daily fixture on the show) which stretches back to 1993, and a collection of video excerpts which you can watch on your PC. You can also download RealAudio clips of past musical guests, including Isaac Hayes and Elliot Smith, and enter your own ideas for future gags. Log on and see why this man is cult viewing.

The choice of hip Yanks: *The Late Show*

WORDS: JENNIFER KEARNS; PICTURE: BBC

MEMORABILIA

Touched by the stars

How to get your hands on the things the stars have had *their* hands on

Dedicatedfan.com

www.dedicatedfan.com ★★

If you're looking for an autographed pic of a celeb, this is the place to go. Movie star's signature? They've got it, no problem. Sports personalities? Of course. Pop stars? They're here too. And that's about it. For a site that bills itself as one of the 'largest memorabilia sellers in the world', it's a bit short on, well, memorabilia. Apart from the monikered mug-shots and the odd signed football, this site's the equivalent of a minor soap star in the fame game.

Cult TV Memorabilia

www.tv-memorabilia.demon.co.uk

★★★★

Take a nostalgic trip down Golden TV Lane here with original posters, books and models from *The Professionals*, *The Sweeney* and *The Avengers*. Purchase mean 'n' moody shots of Bodie! (Or is it Doyle? Whatever.) Buy a model of *that* Capri, or the 1977 *Sweeney* annual ('Shut it!'). Take a look at this well laid-out site which, although not vast, is quality.

JF Sporting Collectibles

www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~nfitz/

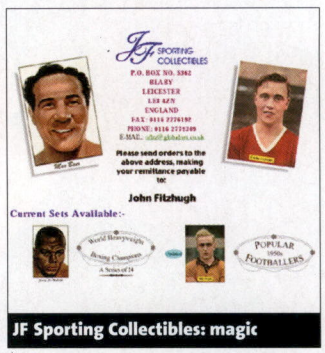
★★★

Reminisce about the glory days at this rather elegant site specialising in 'sporting cigarette cards, trade cards, postcards, autographs and ephemera'. Collect ciggie cards in categories ranging from heavy-weight boxing champs to popular footballers of the 50s – when they wore baggy shorts, plastered their hair down with Brylcreem and smoked 40 tabs a day...

PlanetHollywood.com

www.planethollywood.com ★

The shopping section on this spin-off from the financially-challenged burger chain claims to 'have what you want!'. If that happens to be boring, mindless tat, you've hit pay-dirt. The 'movie collectibles' shopping section seems to consist of worryingly similar mugs and T-shirts. The tie-in with eBay is more successful, with a wrap worn by Marilyn Monroe and a *Star Trek* tricorder up for auction at the time of writing. Beam us away from here, Scotty.



JF Sporting Collectibles: magic

PICK OF THE NET

The Prop Store of London

www.propstore.co.uk ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

With its huge and varied selection, this Web site takes the subject of memorabilia very seriously indeed. Each of its (many) pieces is thoroughly checked and researched, and comes with a certificate of authenticity – just the thing when someone mistakes your £1,995 Tom Cruise outfit from *Mission Impossible* (leather jacket, jumper and trousers) for a similar ensemble from Top Man that costs slightly less. Take a look round this easy to navigate site, and you too could be the proud owner of a *Gladiator* shield, a frock from *Sleepy Hollow* or Sandra Bullock's outfit from *Speed*.

'Perhaps Sir would prefer something in the lilac?'

WORDS: CLAIRE MCHATTIE; PICTURES: REX FEATURES

BEST CELEBRITIES SITES ★★★★★

where can I?

FIND GOOD GOSSIP?
www.mrshowbiz.com The fastest track to loads of gossip, with the odd exclusive, too.
www.celebritypalace.com Plenty of gossip, plus links and resources.

FIND A STAR'S ADDRESS?
www.thezone.pair.com/email After emailing, you can pop by for a visit – this site also provides addresses.
www.celebrityemail.com Over 14,000 celebs on its pages, from supermodels to princes. Forwards your messages automatically.

READ MAGAZINES?
www.eonline.com The latest happenings in the worlds of music, TV, film and video.
www.people.com Online version of the popular American *People* magazine.

FIND CELEBRITY HOME PAGES?
www.celebsites.com Links to official sites of celebrities from all walks of fame.
www.usfanclubs.com Masses of links to official sites and fan clubs for all kinds of celebs.

MEET MY HERO?
www.yack.com Updated list of celebrity events on the Net, including chat opportunities.
www.iknewthemwhen.com Meet the stars before they were famous.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?
alt.showbiz.gossip If you want to discuss the finer points of Kylie's love life or whether Robbie Williams and Geri Halliwell's romance is the true thing, do it here.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?
www.greatstar.com/andy/newslet.html Music fans won't want to miss out on Andy Winslow's newsletter about the top celebs in the biz.

GET CHATTING?
www.launch.com/Chat/fs_Start Why wait for them in their favourite trendy bar when you can chat to all the top celebs online?

information you want, then it probably doesn't exist. The large memorabilia section includes items such as concert programmes, posters and photos – and the odd gold disc if you're particularly flush. Plus there's a reference guide to the value of various paraphernalia. This easy to use site also has a rather macabre fascination with death – it lists stars who have either snuffed it or who've had serious injuries, presumably because a dead rock star is a valuable rock star.

Vintage Magazine Company

www.vinmag.com ★★★

Vintage Magazine's site narrows the field of movie collectibles to posters, original lobby cards, stills and magazine pics – not forgetting the ubiquitous 'ephemera'. Original posters on sale here include *A Star is Born* (£125), *A Breath of Scandal* (£275) and *Paris Blues* (£350). This thorough site is also home to a massive selection of comics and vintage magazines.

Heathside Collectibles

www.heathtoys.com ★★★

You know those little plastic toys that fast food chains give away in promotions for TV shows and films? Well, there's a (booming) market for them, and it seems as if you can buy every single one ever made at this humungous site. 3D *A-Team* stickers are yours for $7.50, or maybe you'd prefer a *Bionic Woman* flask for $24.50. And a Smurf ('real cute') is a steal at $14.50. Remind yourself of your age here.

'Albums? What do you mean have we got any albums?'

REFEREES

I am the law!

Like the police, sport's officials are there to keep order. And are therefore similarly unpopular

Referees' Association

www.referee.u-k.org ★★★★

'Men and women like you take up refereeing for a number of reasons. Many are frustrated footballers,' says this site. Frustrated dictators more like, but they'll be among mates at the RA. Membership benefits include a full-colour mag, wittily entitled *The Football Referee*. Like the best refs, this site is well organised but not eye-catching.

Refeream

ww1.comteck.com/~jighm/refeream/index.html ★★★

Terrible name for a witty site dedicated to denigrating American basketball officials (as if wearing those ridiculous black and white shirts isn't humiliation enough). Some of the humour requires knowledge about the game (also known as giraffes' netball), but much of the laughs are so direct they translate into any sport.

Fox 40 Whistles

www.fox40.ca/homefox.htm ★★★

A ref is nothing without a whistle, as professional basketball ref Ron Foxcroft realised; he invented a pealess whistle in the late 80s and is now listed as one of Canada's top 10 entrepreneurs. The Fox 40 whistle can be heard a mile away, so you might want to turn the sound down when you listen to the audio samples on this commercial site.

Settle pub disputes at eReferee.com

Fifa Laws of the Game

www.fifa2.com/scripts/runisa.dll?57:gp::67173+refs/laws ★★★★

The Internet is itself a great referee – a decider for drunken arguments. If the plank down the pub swears blind that you can score a goal direct from a throw-in, you can direct them to Fifa's site, which explains the 17 laws with the help of Roy of the Rovers-style graphics.

PICK OF THE NET

Roy Keane's tackle left the ref completely legless

eReferee.com

www.ereferee.com ★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

'We Rule!', boasts this American site. No you don't, you impose. But whether you want to be bossy in baseball, basketball, ice hockey, softball or that funny American version of 'football' you'll find a spiritual home here (or at its sister site eUmpire.com). There are several informative articles on relatively interesting aspects of officiating. Somewhat annoyingly, you have to become a member to read the content – well, refs do love to take a few names – but you do get a free T-shirt.

For more sports sites, turn to Need To Know on page 105

WORDS: GARY PARKINSON; PICTURE: EMPICS

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DDB

Bad boys!

The greatest sportsmen can also, strangely, be the dirtiest players – and the Web celebrates them all

You Cannot be Serious!

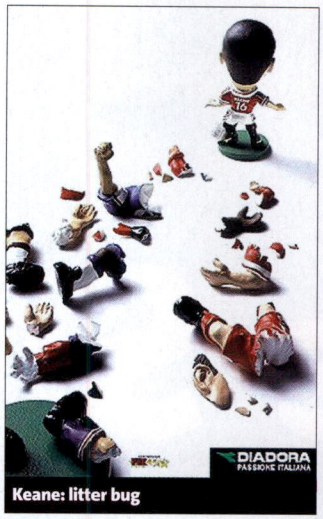
www.erols.co.uk/McEnroe.htm ★★

Admittedly this isn't the greatest Web site, but worth including for one aspect: John McEnroe was as famous for his temperamental outbursts as he was for his outrageous tennis skills. Who could forget him admonishing umpires and linesmen – especially when the audio files are here to remind you.

John Daly's Home Page

www.gripitandripit.com ★★★

He started drinking when he was eight years old, he's got three ex-wives and loves to gamble. His divorce from his third wife came after a blazing row with her, which culminated in him trashing a hotel room and ending up in hospital. Somehow, though, he has still managed to find the time to win two major championships – what a guy.



Keane: litter bug

Roy Keane's Unofficial Homepage

www.geocities.com/Colosseum/Track/1475 ★★

It's a shame the multimedia section isn't up and running, but then it was a shame that Gareth Southgate wasn't up and running after Keano stamped on him in the 1995 FA Cup semi-final. It was a great example to set just days after a Crystal Palace fan had been killed in a brawl with Manchester United fans – and the media and establishment were calling on players to become better role models.

The well-dressed farmers carefully positioned their scarecrow

PICK OF THE NET

Diego Maradona

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

www.diegomaradona.com ★★★★★

He may be one of the most skillful footballers ever to have graced a pitch, he may have scored one of the greatest goals ever when he skinned half the England team in 1986 and he may have won a World Cup almost single handedly. But that doesn't detract from the fact that he also cheated against England by scoring the 'Hand of God' goal, or the fact that he's snorted enough coke to make a blue whale hyperactive.

WORDS: PAUL WINSLOW; PICTURES: PA, ACTION IMAGES

Has Sir Alex got enough titles?

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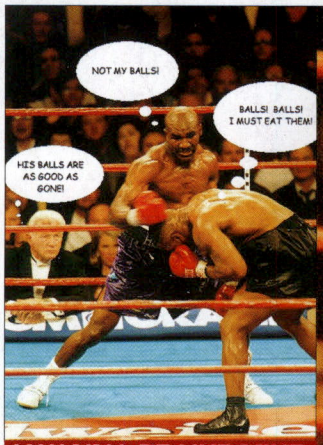
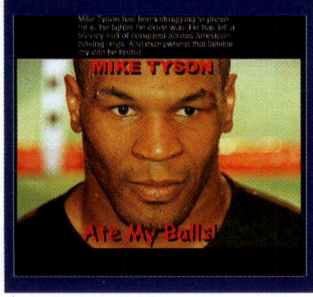


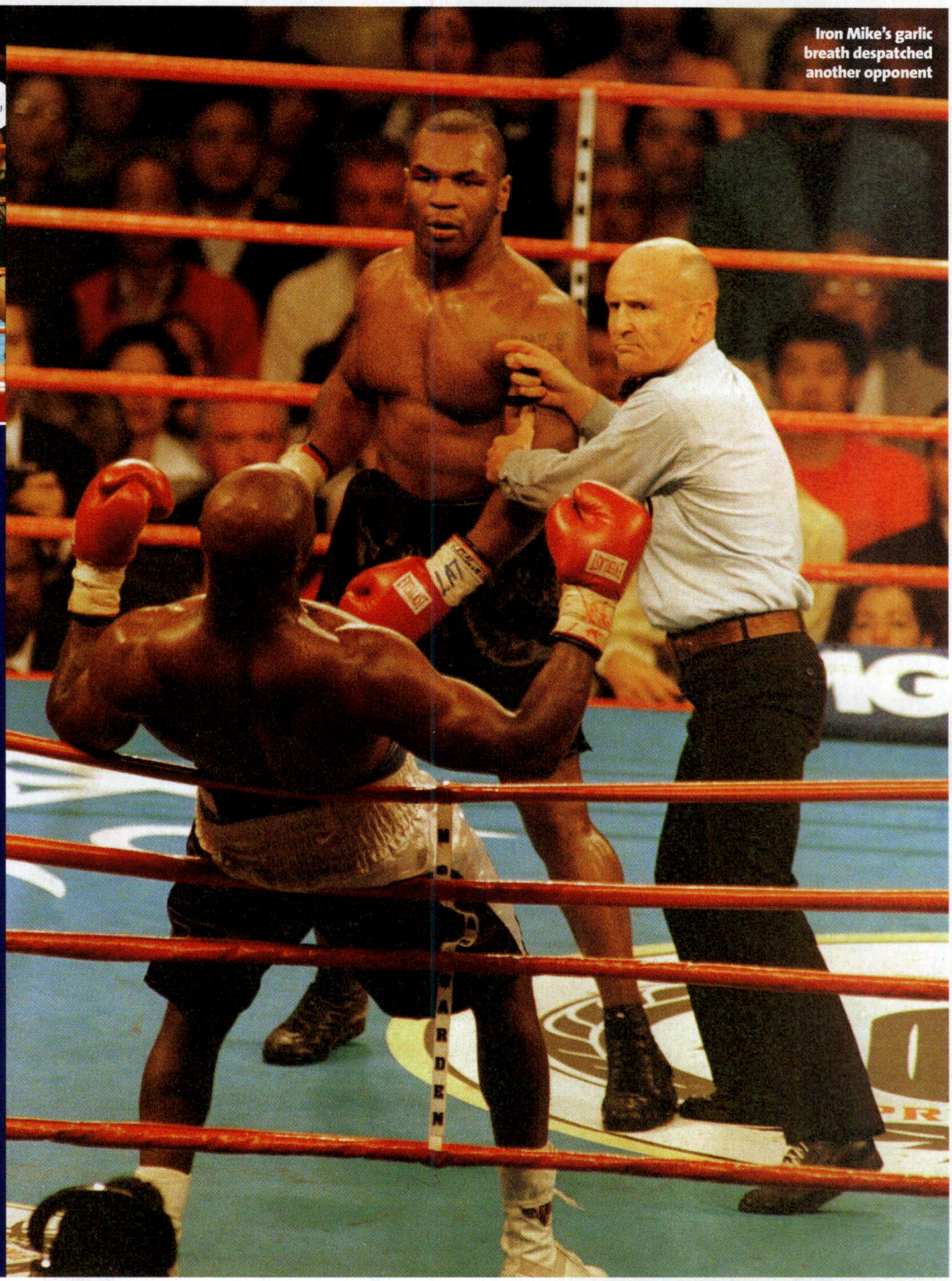
I WANNA BE LIKE MIKE

Dinner's ready...

A bad boys round-up would not be complete without mention of the teeth-munching, heart-eating (well, he said he wanted to) lovely young convicted rapist they call Tyson. Courting controversy seemingly everywhere he goes, out of his whole career the one event he'll probably be most remembered for is deciding that Evander Holyfield's shell-like looked like quite a tasty snack.

The Internet responded to this momentous occasion as only it can, so read the Unofficial I Want To Bite Like Mike home page at *www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/7716/bite.htm*, or discover that he doesn't stop at ears with the Mike Tyson Ate My Balls page at *www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Stage/3491/index.html*.




Iron Mike's garlic breath despatched another opponent

Dennis Rodman

dennisrodman.athletedirect.com

★★★

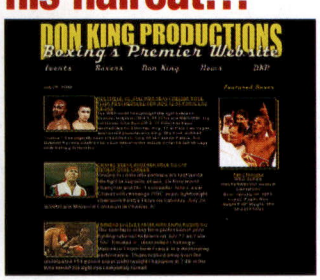
'I like my music loud. I like my alcohol hard. I like my women hot. I like my food spicy. Does that make me a bad guy?' Of course not, Dennis, although the fact you also say, 'I like tight clothes. I like women's clothes. I enjoy dressing like a woman' is a tad worrying. A list of accomplishments as long as your arm matched only by a list of misdemeanours.

Don King Productions

www.donking.com ★★★

It's not as if boxing promoter Don King needs to say anything offensive with the hairstyle he's got, but he still manages it on regular occasions. The highlight of this site is undoubtedly the biography. It praises the man to the high heavens – so much so that you can almost see him writing it himself.

It's not as if Don King needs to say anything offensive, with his haircut...



Bodyline

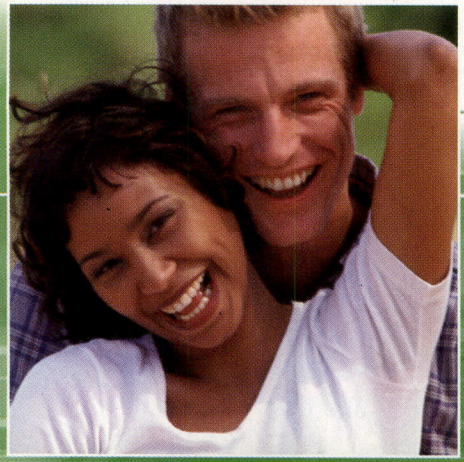
www.ashes1.com ★★★

In the winter of 1932-33 England travelled to Australia to win the Ashes. The teams were quite evenly matched but with one exception: the mighty Don Bradman, possibly the greatest batsman of all time, was in his prime – and England had to stop him. Captain Douglas Jardine and fast bowler Harold Larwood devised 'Bodyline', and there was uproar about the idea of bowling at the batsman, not the wicket. Find out the full story on the excellent Bodyline section here.

Wacky Races

www.80snostalgia.com/classictv/wackyraces ★★★★

No, we haven't put this one in the wrong place – think about it. You can take your Tysons, your Rodmans and your Keanes but there's one person who's badder than them all. Dick Dastardly, the evil, conniving cheat, tried every way possible to win the Wacky Races by foul means. Usually the incompetence of his sidekick Muttley ensured he ▶



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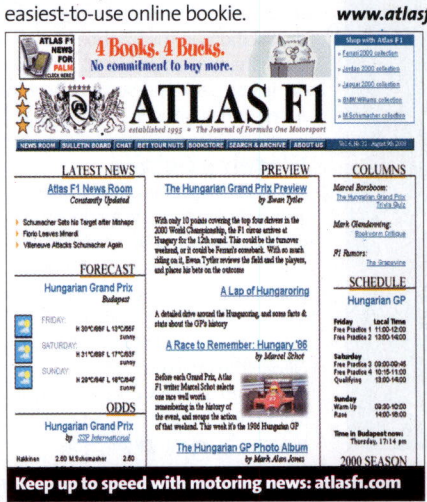
www.planet-rugby.com The place where the oval-ball rules.
www.atlasf1.com News, articles and chat from the online motoring mag.
www.boxingonline.com Online king of the ring.
www.nba.com/uk Catch up on all the news in the run-up to the current season tip-off.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

uk.sport.football Vent your spleen about the state of British football.

GET CHATTING?

www.4-lane.com/sports-chat A variety of boards for popular sports.



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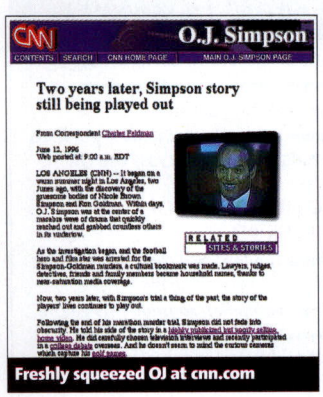
consistently managed to fail in a way where all the other sportsmen here have succeeded – being a winner.

OJ Simpson

www.cnn.com/US/OJ/index.html
★★★★
This side of the pond we're not exactly overly concerned with that daft game the Yanks have the temerity to call football, so we don't know many of the overpaid ponces that play the game. OJ Simpson, however, is somewhat different. But Simpson is famous for something other than his (quite considerable) sporting achievements – and no, it's not his appearance in the *Naked Gun* films. Read all about one of the most famous murder trials in history here.

Shane Warne – the Art of Wrist Spin

cricket.toneware.com/howshane.htm
★★★
There is very little information about Warney here, but you can find out just how he manages to do such amazing things with a cricket ball. However, it does seem to be missing some info – it doesn't have any advice on accepting money from bookies and getting away with a mere slap on that spinning wrist, being paid thousands to stop smoking and then lighting up again, or having a brawl in a London bar... but he's equally adept at all of those.



Freshly squeezed OJ at cnn.com

Scotland's summer was not conducive to sunbathing

Cold Lazarus

Cheat death – become a human ice lolly

Cryonics Institute

www.cryonics.org ★★★★
Sign up with the Cryonics Institute and, when you shuffle off this mortal coil, they'll preserve you for a bargain-basement $28,000. But will you ever be re-animated? 'The explicit public consensus, among scientists...is that cryonics is technologically possible and may be achieved soon.' Hmmm...

Alcor Life Extension Foundation

www.alcor.co.uk ★★★
Handily adjacent to the wrinkly paradise of Eastbourne is the only UK cryonics company, Alcor. Once preserved, the 'patients' are shipped out to storage tanks in Scottsdale, Arizona. Prices range from £37,000 for a neuro (head only) to £80,000 for whole-body. But life insurance brings the deal down to just £2 a day. Where do we sign?

European Cryonics

members.wbs.net/homepages/c/r/y/cryonic4life/europe.html ★★
We cynical Brits haven't embraced this whole cryonics malarkey wholeheartedly, but there's growing interest – 70 people are currently on ice – so find out what your chances of everlasting life are here. But beware: the Webmaster calls himself 'Soylent Green', after the sci-fi movie where the state recycles dead bodies for food.

Cryogenic Laboratories Inc

www.cryolab.com ★★★★
Want to live forever, but can't afford whole-body freezing? Well, for around $180 a year this Minnesota-based lab will preserve your seed at -321°F. You don't even have to trek out there to make your 'deposit', as for a small fee they'll send a Semen Transport Kit straight to your door. Now that's what we call service.

THE NET'S FAVOURITE

American Cryonics Society

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

www.jps.net/cryonics ★★★★★
Cryonics is the science of preserving your body, head or brain after death, in the hope that future generations can be bothered to thaw you out and heal you. Okay, it's a long shot – but you can't take it with you, so what have you got to lose? This informative site tells of the latest research and describes the quick-freezing equipment the ACS has, all spiced up with a quirky selection of links – such as plans for a Deanimation Alarm that calls the boys with the big fridge in case you peg it in your sleep.

WORDS: MATTHEW BINGHAM; PICTURES: KOBAL COLLECTION

Happy honeymoon!

'Marry in haste, repent at leisure...' We help you find places where you can ponder that cheery question

Honeymoon on the Seas
www.honeymooncruiseshopper.com ★★★
What better way to start the rest of your lives together than on a cruise? Well, that's what this site says and it's sticking to it. It claims to offer the 'best honeymoon cruise packages on Earth', including a seven-day Eastern Caribbean tour on the *Grand Princess* or the yacht-like *Windstar*. Send details of when you're going and they'll email back a quote.

Destinations Europe
www.heartofeurope.com/honyhot3.html ★★★★
If your wedding was aimed more for *Hello!* than Aunt Hilda and your gown more couture than Berkertex, then you'll probably get your honeymoon arranged by this Suffolk-based company. It provides custom-made, land-only European honeymoon packages; they'll even rent a car for you. Packages for two start at $2,500, so for something *unique*, go here, darling.

Frommers has escapes to the 'charming old world' (that's Europe, folks)

The Independent Traveller
www.independentraveller.co.uk/honeymoons.htm ★★★★
This Berkshire-based travel agent will arrange tailor-made honeymoons based on an online profile which you fill out. Alternatively, you can visit their shop or arrange for one of their agents to visit you at home (if you live nearby, that is). Browse through the different choices for something prepackaged (five days spent polar bear watching in Canada, perhaps?).

Just Honeymoons
www.justhoneymoons.net ★★★
For those couples who want to celebrate their lurve somewhere hot, this American site specialises in all-inclusive Sandals resort packages in warmer climates such as Jamaica and the South Pacific. The company can also provide tailored itineraries for honeymoons that are based on where you're going and how much you are aiming to spend.

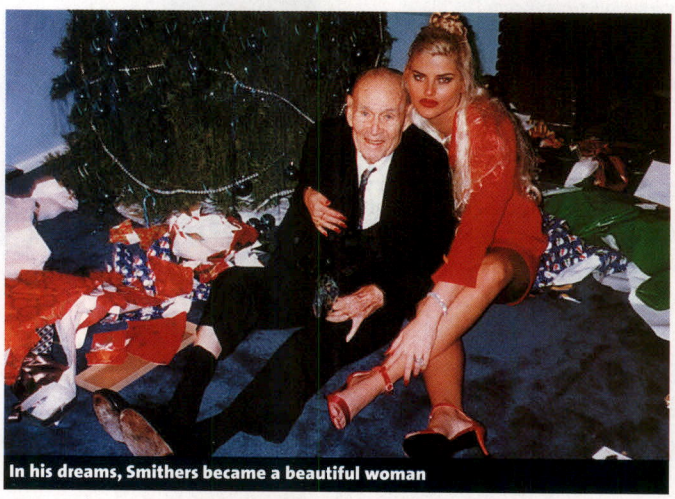
Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel
www.frommers.com/vacations/honeymoons ★★★
For those of us who can't afford a seven-day Caribbean cruise, a quick glance at Frommer's site will come as a relief. Aside from his 'places I recommend', which gives the thumbs up to the Dominican Republic as a cheap honeymoon hotspot, our man Arthur also gives the lowdown on 'five affordable, glamorous honeymoons', as well as escapes to the 'charming "old world"' (that's Europe, folks).

4 Anything Network
www.4honeymoons.4anything.com ★★★★
Excellent for DIYers, this site offers dozens of links for honeymooners, including adventurous destinations and hotspots. If you and your beloved are cyclists, why not try a Van Gogh Cycling Tour? And if things don't go to plan, there's even a link for whingeing.

About.com
www.honeymoons.about.com ★★★★
Another site chock full of links. Here you can find a list of the top 10 honeymoon destinations (England's number six, since you ask). There's also separate options for the gay and lesbian honeymooner, as well as compatibility tests to see if you've made a huge mistake (maybe best to ignore that one), plus contests offering free breaks.

Honeymoons.com
www.Honeymoons.com ★★★★
Booking your honeymoon is one thing, being prepared for it is another. This simple site offers ideas on how to ensure everything goes smoothly for you and your better half. Guides to popular honeymoon destinations in the Caribbean and the Bahamas are provided, as well as tips on packing. You can also win a free honeymoon in Mexico.

Wedding Details
www.weddingdetails.com ★★★
This online magazine focuses more on the wedding than the holiday, but offers a comprehensive travel guide. The Honeymoon Destination Menu lists about 150 different places to visit, from New Jersey to Nepal (the key word with both: don't). You can pick up some travel safety tips and learn about various places of interest.


In his dreams, Smithers became a beautiful woman

BEST TRAVEL SITES ★★★★★

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www.myownprice.com This site tries to match the price you want to pay.
www.deckchair.com Flight-finders.

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www.tips4trips.com 1,000 handy 'tips for trips'.
www.fco.gov.uk/travel Get info on countries before setting off.
www.travel-news.org Good source of independent news for travellers.

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www.placestostay.com This will find you a suitable place to rest up.
www.cottage-net.ndirect.co.uk Self-catering database.
www.smoothhound.co.uk A guide to B&Bs and hotels across the UK.

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www.LondonTown.com/index2.html Things to do in the Big Smoke.
www.virgin.net/daysout Tips galore.
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alt.wedding Planning for and recovering from your big day.

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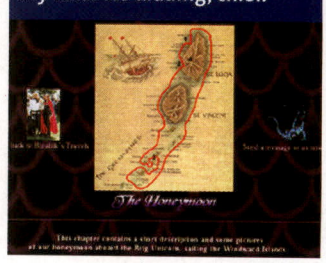
Discuss Disney honeymoons by sending an email with 'info disney-mooners-list' in the message to ***majordomo@datasoup.com***

GET CHATTING?
www.travelchannel.com Share tips.

TRAVELLER'S TALE

Caribbean surprise

Honeymoons.com tells us that 'everybody loves a lover'. This may be true, but we don't love their honeymoon diaries. Worth checking out, though, is Binabik's Travels (***www.shadowdragon.org.uk/binabik/travels/honeymoon/honeymoon.htm***). Binabek Erkynlander, of the Clan of the Snow Leopard, describes himself as a 'travelling Mongol'. He honeymooned in St Lucia – and obviously hadn't done his homework. 'When we arrived', he says, 'we were greeted by a wave of heat! I had to take off most of my furs.' No kidding, chief.



The dapper fireman caught another lady

PICK OF THE NET

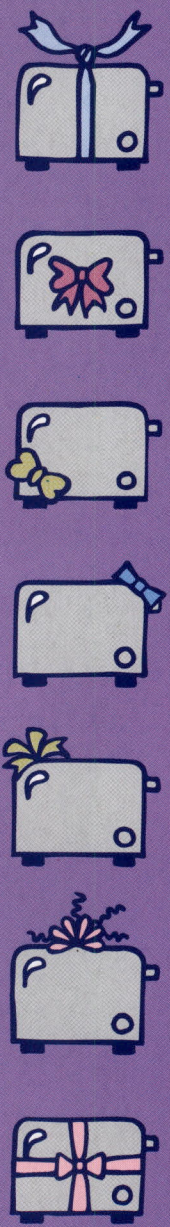
Special Honeymoon Hotels

www.hotelworld.com/specialhotels/index.html ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Your Wedding magazine and Everyman Travel Guides have worked together to provide a comprehensive list of the most honeymoon-ish places to stay worldwide. But beware: since the authors translate that into destinations high on slush and low on irony, travellers without strong stomachs might want to surf elsewhere. Find out if the dates you're looking for are available; and, if they are, book online. With a wide selection of destinations, even the picky should find *something* to suit.

WORDS: JENNIFER KEARNS; PICTURES: KOBAL, REX FEATURES



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confetti.co.uk
weddings made simple.

Anyone fancy a bacon sarnie?

Vegetarian poetry, vegan Mars Bars, leather-free footwear – all this and more on the veggieweb

Veggie Land

www.veggieland.co.uk ★★

Vast, lurid site designed to be a community for vegetarians (vegans live just over the border and are welcome to borrow lentils whenever they like). If you can get past the frantic opening pages and cutesy prose, there's a wealth of information and resources here. Try the café for chat and messages, or send a postcard from the Post Office. There's even a Red Light district packed with sex advice for vegetarian lovers. The Veggieland bus will guide you round the main attractions of the site, including a campaign to persuade Mars to launch a vegan Mars Bar.

CJD struck without warning

World Guide to Vegetarianism

www.veg.org/veg/guide ★★★

Part of the larger Vegetarian Pages site, this is an extraordinarily detailed list of vegetarian shops and restaurants all over the world. No matter where you are going, there seems to be a veggie establishment to suit your needs. Hungry in Bali? Try Aromas in Legian for vegetarian nosh with a Pacific twist.

Vegetarian Vacations

www.kc3.co.uk/~bicycle/veggie ★★★

Bicycle Beano Tours, who organise cycling holidays in the Welsh Borders, promote not only their own business, but other veggie holidays across the world. The site has contact details and links to Web sites for everything from B&Bs (where the breakfast comes with a soya sausage), to tailor-made vegetarian courses and retreats. And if you're feeling adventurous (or are a glutton for punishment), take a vegan wilderness expedition in Alaska.

Veggies Unite!

www.vegweb.com ★★★★

Wondering what to do with those mung beans gathering dust at the back of the larder? How about a Southwestern corn and bean fritter, or a tangy cucumber and mung bean sprout salad? Join here to upload your favourite meat-free recipes or simply browse through the hundreds of dishes already on the site. There's also a section on vegetarian poetry (no, really) and a dating service, so you can find that special someone to share a lentil casserole with.

Vegan Store

www.veganstore.co.uk ★★★★

It's not easy, being a vegan. Not only are delicious meaty dishes off the menu, you can't even wear decent shoes. But browse this online store and you'll find masses of vegan-friendly stuff, including bath products, leather-free boots, shoes, belts and wallets, not to mention 'sausage' mix and chocolate nut spread.

BEST FOOD SITES ★★★★★

where can I?

BUY WINE ONLINE?

www.madaboutwine.com
Online shop with good discounts.
www.virginwines.com
Easy to use even for wine amateurs, and a chance to win wine for life.

GET THE LATEST FOOD NEWS?

www.foodchannel.com
Get all the lowdown on new tastes.
www.food.epicurious.com
Strange little site with cooking tips, chef profiles and nifty food forums.

BUY INGREDIENTS ONLINE?

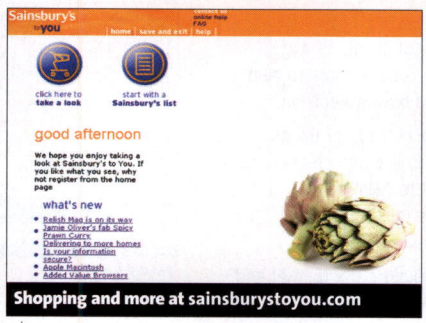
www.tesco.co.uk/indexn.htm
The most innovative of the big online supermarkets.
www.sainsburystoyou.com
Recipes, competitions, articles and eye-pleasing shopping.

FIND A COOL RESTAURANT?

www.london-restaurants.com
Locate a restaurant in the capital without spending the earth.
www.restaurants.co.uk
Search for an eatery or visit one of the site's recommendations.

LEARN ABOUT GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD?

www.greenpeace.org/~geneng
Learn how to avoid genetic foods.
www.monsanto.co.uk
Presents the opposite side of the argument.



Shopping and more at sainsburystoyou.com

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

Vegans can swap recipes at ***alt.food.vegan***.

GET CHATTING?

Veggie parents can share tips at ***www.vegetarian-baby.com/page6.html***.

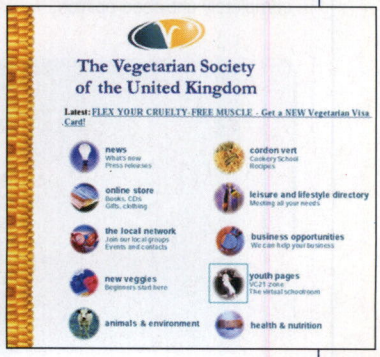
PICK OF THE NET

The Vegetarian Society

www.vegsoc.org ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

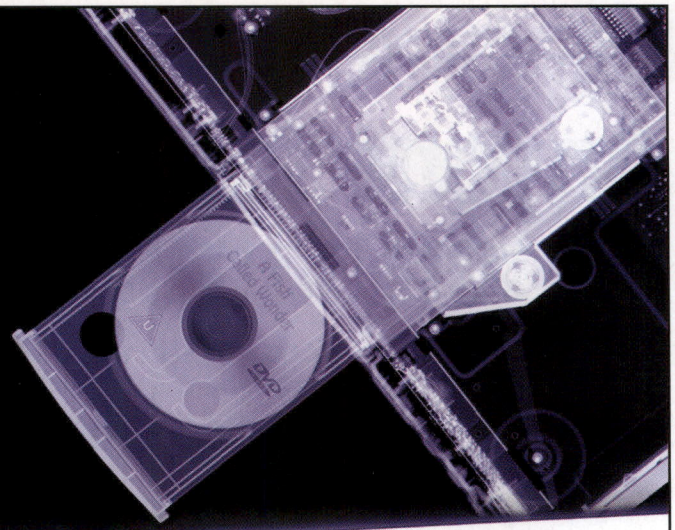
Well-designed and comprehensive site packed with info about vegetarian issues. There are tips on becoming a veggie and avoiding animal products, as well as health articles to convince worried parents that their kids won't fade away on a meatless diet. The kids' page has a pen pal service for little veggies to meet like-minded meat-free chums, and there are links to sites for clothing, shoes and food.



Only Babe got near Arthur Lowe's real weight of 12st 7lb

WORDS: VICTORIA WILLIAMS; PICTURE: KOBAL COLLECTION, REX FEATURES

Get the inside story before you buy



This new website helps you choose which products are right for you

When you're planning an important purchase, it pays to check with the experts at www.goldfishguide.com.

We review a whole range of products and services in depth, giving you the facts to help you make a well-informed buying decision.

We've expertly assessed all kinds of things from washing machines to vacuum cleaners, DVD players to TVs, PCs to palmtops. We've even taken a close look at online shopping and travel sites.

When you're starting to explore the market and need to know all about what's available, Goldfish Guide is indispensable. It's equally useful if you've more or less decided what you want to buy, but would like to make a final feature-by-feature comparison with similar products.

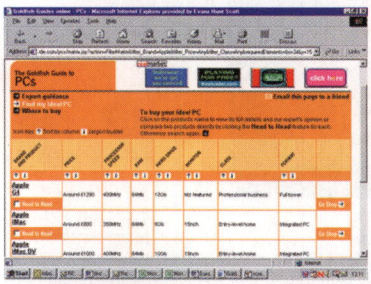
And what's more, to everyone with Internet access it's free.

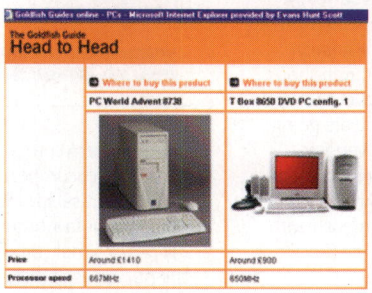
Expert opinions you can trust

Let's say you're looking for a new computer – not an easy buying decision these days. Choose one that isn't suitable, and you've made a very expensive mistake.

So who do you trust to help you decide what's the best buy for you? Salespeople may only recommend the models they stock, and they may not be as knowledgeable as you'd like. With all the technical jargon, it's easy to get confused.

That's where our impartial experts come in. They really know their subject. For example, the team reviewing computers includes Jeremy Spencer, with 12 years' experience as editor of Britain's biggest selling PC monthly, *Computer Shopper*. All our reviewers give you a completely unbiased opinion.





Your step-by-step buying guide

What happens when you click on www.goldfishguide.com? Simply select the type of product you're interested in from a pull-down menu, and our experts start to help you right away.

First, there's a general guide to what to look for when you're buying. An example from the PC guide is 'Graphics accelerator: go for 8Mb as a minimum, and 16Mb or 32Mb for games or graphics applications.'

You don't know what a 'graphics accelerator' is? Just go to our 'jargon buster' and you'll find it clearly explained.

But perhaps you're already familiar with this kind of background information. In that case, go straight to our review of products. PCs are divided into sections according to whether you want an entry level, mid-range or professional model for home or business use.

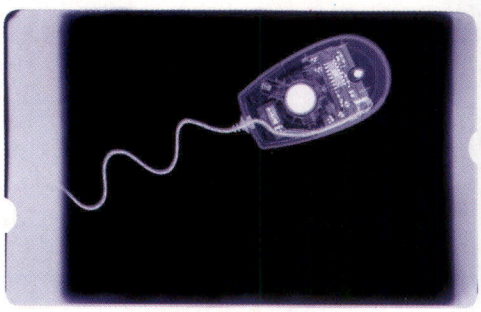
Find your personal best buy

Browse through the section that interests you, or make an initial shortlist, by selecting a particular make or price range for example. Next you can refine your search even further by specifying other features you want.

When you've read our experts' comments, and found some products that have everything you're looking for, you can compare them head to head and decide exactly which one is your personal best buy.

Then if you're interested in purchasing it online we can take you direct to a reputable retail site. Or maybe you'd rather look for a deal in the high street.

Either way, you can be confident that you're making a well-informed decision based on facts, not sales talk. Inside information from Goldfish Guide could stop you buying something that isn't right for you. And save you from wasting hundreds of pounds.



www.goldfishguide.com

Get the facts on: dishwashers • vacuum cleaners • fridges and freezers • washers and dryers • freestanding cookers • TVs and digital services • DVD players • VCRs PCs • laptops • palmtops • printers • online shopping sites • online travel sites • cars
Coming soon: midi systems • MP3 players • games and consoles • digital cameras

Goldfish Guide™

'I wouldn't fight that just yet if I were you'

'More tea, Vicar?'

Posh up your Ps and Qs online with these guides

Etiquette Grrls

www.etiquettegrrls.com
★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

What d'you get when you mix etiquette with attitude? Etiquettegrrls.com, whose site opens: 'At this very moment, someone, somewhere is wearing a tube top in church. At a funeral.' Other modern-day faux-pas include non-essential mobile phone conversations, chomping loudly on olives and swing dancing in Gap khakis. The site questions why it's so difficult to find a really good dry-cleaner or Web development partner and, even more baffling, why aren't Ricky Martin's 15 minutes of fame over yet?

Debrett's

www.debretts.co.uk ★★★

Debrett's takes calls each day from anxious people 'facing the prospect of correctly addressing Royalty and the Peerage'. In case you've lost sleep over how to greet a peer should you bump into one at KwikSave, Debrett's has uploaded some of its etiquette guide; it's clearly in development but it'll develop into a site befitting a publisher claiming to be 'the authority on contemporary Britain'.

Debretts: how to talk to posh people

Emily Post's Etiquette

www.bartleby.com/95 ★★★★

Should one want to learn a bit of decorum, one should read the words of the ghost of Ms Post, who sought to preserve American 20th-century decorum (come again?). Dip into her 1922 work *Etiquette*, which tells you how to behave in every situation in life. Plenty to chortle at, especially the section on business and politics, which expresses Ms Post's horror at a politician 'who kept his hat on his head and a cigar in the corner of his mouth' when addressing a senator's wife. If only she knew what they did with cigars these days.

Epicurious .com

www.epicurious.com/c_play/co2_polite/polite.html
★★★★

Wonderful foodie site Epicurious.com tells you how to deal with anything from fish to fowl, from figs to frog legs (fingers are OK for the latter, by the way). As well as solving tabletop dilemmas such as where to spit a cherry stone (into your tightly cupped hand and deposit them on your dessert plate, don't you know), it even tells you where to tuck those pesky disused sugar wrappers.

WORDS: SUE WEEKES (LEARNING), JENNIFER KEARNS (HISTORY); PICTURES: KOBAL COLLECTION

They shall be remembered

Passed on, no more, ceased to be, ex-animals...

Dodoisland

ecom.mcb.co.mu/dodo/home.asp
★★★★

Poor old dodo. If anything represents the negative results humans can have on the environment, it's this extinct bird. First discovered around 1600, the dodo was wiped out less than 80 years later. This site combines information about the doomed dodo with travel information about 'dodoisland' (Mauritius). Sign up and you might even win a trip there.

Dinosaurs Dinosaurs Dinosaurs!

www.dinodon.com ★★★★

Don't know your baryonyx from your apatosaurus? Then stop by 'Dino' Don Lessem's page, where there's an ever-growing dinosaur dictionary, quiz, gallery, books and videos to peruse. You can email an expert with any dino queries (we're waiting to hear if the hadrosaurus suffered from a runny nose), and there's information on how you can go on a dinosaur dig.

History of My Passenger Pigeon

www.ulala.org/P_Pigeon/George.html ★★★

Get past Garrie Landry's ramblings about his stuffed specimen ('the taxidermist truly did a superb job') and you'll find essays from enthusiasts about their encounters with passenger pigeons. They outnumbered all other North American birds in the early 1800s until commercial hunting got the better of them.

Dinorama

www.nationalgeographic.com/dinorama/frame.html ★★★★

National Geographic's site provides detailed information on topics such as what the recent feathered dinosaur discoveries in China tell us about dinos and whether the ancient beasts were more maternal than previously thought. Links to published *Geographic* articles and interactive press conferences will keep you informed of any new breakthroughs.

The new quarterback needed to build up his arm muscles

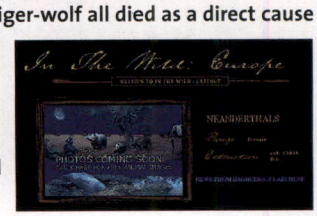
THE NET'S FAVOURITE

Bagheera

www.bagheera.com/inthewild/extinct.htm ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

All the information you'll need to become an active conservationist, something you'll no doubt consider after reading about all the animals which bit the dust in the past century. The blue pike, Caribbean monk seal, heath hen, passenger pigeon and Tasmanian tiger-wolf all died as a direct cause of human interference – and worryingly, the 'vanishing' list, which includes elephants, Komodo dragons and manatees, is even longer. Check out the recommended reading, save the world and feel better about yourself.



Madasafish

freedom for the net generation

- no busy tones
- no downtime
- fastest access on the planet
- top email address
- free dedicated webspace
- free fast games servers
- free MP3 music and movie previews
- free support
- fast low cost domain name registration

We are faster, funkier and friendlier than your average ISP.

It's not just the the big mean red mutha fish (Red Dude to his pals) or the unforgettable name. **Madasafish?** We mean it.

We run our own network with superfast connectivity. And we run our own state of the art support centre. No one tells **Madasafish** what to do, except our members.

We know what you don't want from your ISP

You don't want downtime, engaged tones or a naff email address.

Fast free support

We give you top free support, right away. If you're a Madasafish member and you need help with any aspect of getting online, just call **01851 777727,** one of our ace customer service agents will fix you up fast. And don't panic - it's not a premium rate call like some so-called "free" ISPs - it's just your telephone provider's normal call rate. And you get a real person on the other end of the line.

Well?

do you want it or what?

For fastest subscription-free internet access call free

0800 0273373

to get your free Madasafish install CD or visit

www.madasafish.com for fast online signup

Would you like it fast...?

...or even faster?

Madasafish is one of the leading ISPs already, because of our service and the way we deliver it fast - and we're aiming to make the net even faster. Get online with Madasafish and find-out about our Dazzling new flat rate subscription ADSL service. Call now for details **0845 272 0051**

I have conquered worlds...

Commandeer villages, create waves in the oceans and lead your own armies with strategy gaming

Shogun Total War

www.totalwar.com ★★★

Shogun Total War is the star of the new breed of strategic combat games. Gone are the hexagons of yore; no more the downward view of *Command & Conquer*... here you can engage in real-time 3D battles with thousands of amazingly animated Japanese warriors. It's a shame, then, that – intro aside – the action is pretty slow. It's really only the wealth of information that makes this worth a visit.

Age of Empires II: sexy gaming

Age Of Empires II

www.aoe2.com ★★★★

Microsoft's groundbreaking *Age Of Empires* proved that strategic battle games could look sexy, and this second instalment builds on that reputation. This superb site has everything you could possibly need to master this incredibly taxing sequel, including cheat strategies and detailed guidelines. Develop the confidence to conquer the world just as Julius Caesar did, rather than ending up as a caesar salad at the barbarians' victory feast.

Star Wars Force Commander

www.lucasarts.com/products/forcecommander ★★★★

Stop watching the *Phantom Menace* – you know it's crap! The only good additions to the *Star Wars* universe in the last decade have been the computer games, including *Force Commander*. Play on the Dark Side for awhile and beat those Force-loving, creature-cuddling Rebels into submission (sorry – bad childhood experience with a Luke Skywalker figure). Anyway, there's loads of hints and strategies on this stylish site.

Harpoon

www.harpoonhq.com ★★★★

As far as submarine strategy games go, the *Harpoon* series is *Red October* compared to the others' *Yellow Submarine*. It has a serious edge – but slow-paced, underwater affairs shouldn't really be about fun. If you're interested in submarine simulation, look out for *Harpoon 4*, which is coming soon and has great graphics. Pick up boomer tips and scenarios here.

BEST GAMES SITES ★★★★★

where can I?

PLAY GAMES ONLINE?

www.shockwave.com
Shocked games and cartoons.
www.gameplay.com
Britain's biggest online gaming site.
www.freeloader.com
Play the latest titles for free.

BUY GAMES?

www.gamesstreet.infront.co.uk
Excellent deals on a range of games.
www.game-retail.co.uk
The shop of the High Street store.

FIND DEMOS?

www.happypuppy.com
New demos and shareware games.
www.gameaddict.net
Demos and reviews for PC games.

FIND GAMING NEWS?

www.gamesdomain.co.uk
News and game-related features.
www.gamedaily.com
Get the latest news on this site.

FIND HINTS AND CHEATS?

www.cheatfinder.co.uk
No-fuss UK-based cheat portal.
www.xcheater.com
A large back catalogue of cheats.

PLAY TRADITIONAL GAMES?

games.yahoo.com
Card games, board games and much more.
www.pogo.com
Both traditional and arcade games.

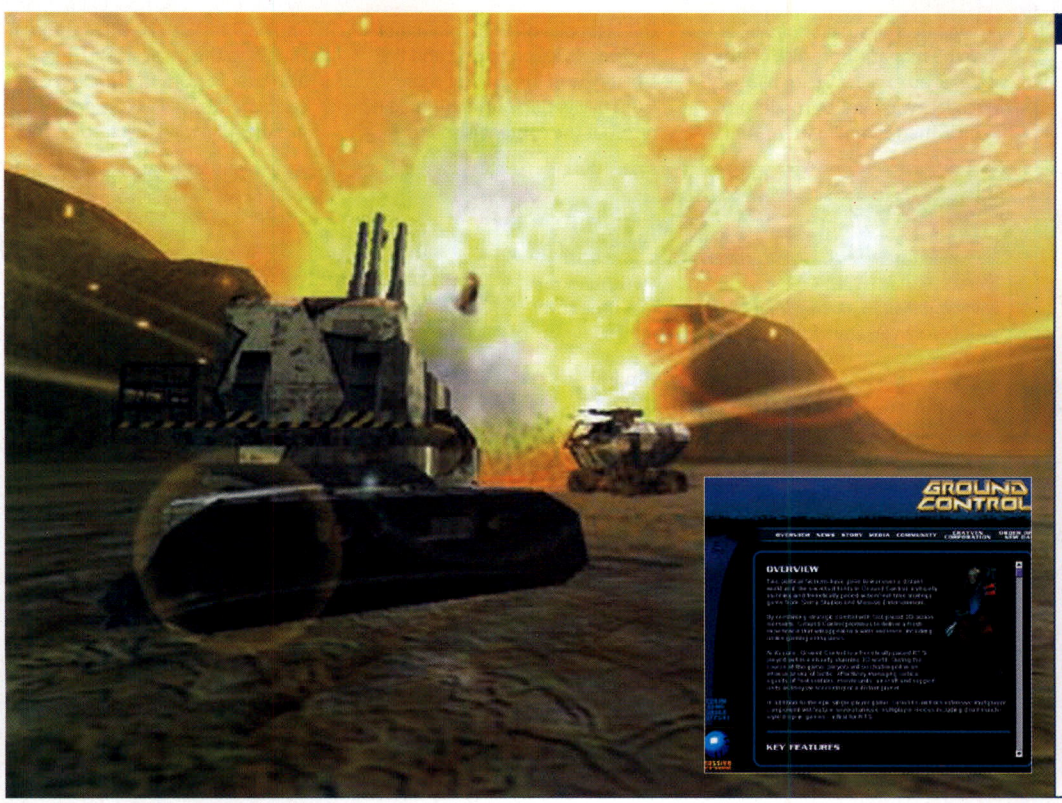
FIND A NEWSGROUP?

comp.sys.ibm.pc.games.action Swap tips here.

GET CHATTING?

www.gamersinn.com/chat
Meet other strategists.

Happypuppy.com: better than a plate of Chum



PICK OF THE NET

Ground Control

www.sierrastudios.com/games/groundcontrol ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Ahh, now this is how to construct a site! *Ground Control* is a fantastic release, and one that sensibly brings to an end the obsession with resource management – the worst part of any strategy game. After all, we all want to be the commanders at the front, not the pen-pushers warming office seats and directing supplies of beans. Here you're immediately forced into action: dumped on a strange planet with a collection of troops you view as friends – until they begin to die, that is. The site is excellent too, with everything both the dedicated player or the merely curious would want.

WORDS: SHAUN MARIN

'I used to be on *Runaround*, you know'

WORDS: SARAH WAKELY (CARS), CHRIS HADLEY (MONEY); PICTURES: PA, BBC

Wheeler dealers

Steer clear of shark-infested forecourts and get your new motor online

Autolocate

www.autolocate.co.uk ★★★★★

Confused about clocking? Restless about ringing? Then head for Autolocate, which contains, along with many other features (such as finance calculators and insurance information), a handy guide to terms you should be aware of before investing. The excellent reviews will guide you to a suitable set of wheels, and the site lets you set up a deal online; enquiries are sent to your nearest dealer. But be warned: 'Use this service ONLY if you are serious about buying a car in the near future!'. Be careful near the 'Proceed with Purchase' on the Ferrari F355 page or you could find yourself a step closer to owning a prancing horse and nearly £106,000 down. Yikes.

What Car? Online

www.whatcar.co.uk ★★★★

Let's face it, with all the will in the world accidents still happen, so you want a car that is going to protect you in an emergency. The online version of *What Car?* will assist by giving results of crash tests for you to compare. The superb road tests from the magazine are also on the site, as is an excellent search facility which lets you hunt by model or finance, then compare them. And this is topped off with a valuation service, advice on buying and the latest news, plus a lot, lot more. Extra navigation buttons would be nice, but the content is sound.

AutoTrader Interactive

www.autotrader.co.uk ★★★★

Abandon your tatty dog-eared copy for the online version which is sleek, easy-to-use and less likely to make your fingers grubby. The impressively vast databases can be searched by manufacturer, model, and price, and new cars can be sifted through thanks to the car selector. Users also benefit from the running cost calculator, as well as comparison facilities and road test results, and

PICK OF THE NET

Allcars

www.allcars.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Great-looking, tidy and easier to navigate than the M25, Allcars might not be the most in-depth site around, but for all-round accessibility it's fantastic. Simply use the drop-down menus to search for a car in your price range and area, and it'll come up with the goods at dealers near you. If nothing appeals, there's always the online auction, plus information and advice on the amount you should be paying for your motor, a help desk with advice on finance, doing the deal and a buyer's checklist, and the latest news from the industry. Links will take you to other useful pages. Drive there now.

BEST MOTORING SITES ★★★★★

where can I?

PLAN A JOURNEY?

www.vauxhall.co.uk/trafficnet
Visit before you start for a visual key to congestion on main UK roads.

www.mapblast.com
Tell it where you are, where you're going and this will get you there.

www.theaa.co.uk/ukroads/traffic.asp
The AA will advise you of any ongoing roadworks.

www.multimap.com
Brilliant interactive atlas of the UK.

FOLLOW MOTORSPORT?

www.autosport.com
World's best site for motorsport news, with live radio coverage.

www.itv-f1.com
ITV joins up with *F1 Racing* magazine to bring you Formula One action.

www.f1-live.com
Real-time coverage and news.

LEARN ABOUT BIKES?

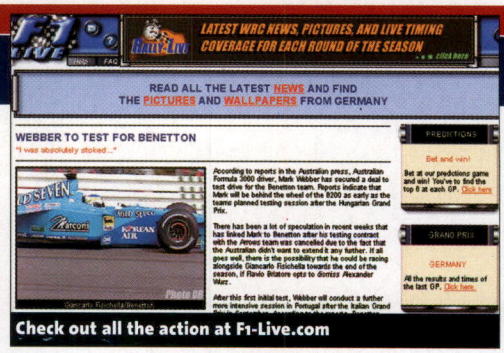
www.motorcycle.com
'The world's largest and most read digital motorcycle magazine'.

www.webbikes.co.uk
The home of *On Two Wheels*.

www.biketrader.co.uk
Buy or sell your bike online.

JOIN A NEWSGROUP?

alt.autos.bmw
Where Beemer owners meet.



Check out all the action at F1-Live.com

FIND A MAILING LIST?

For British car fanciers, send an email with 'info british-cars-digest' in the message to ***majordomo@autox.team.net***

GET CHATTING?

Visit *Top Gear* or *Auto Express*' chat arenas at ***www.forums.beeb.com/topgear*** and ***www.autoexpress.co.uk***

ENTREPRENEURS

'This time next year, Rodders...'

Where to find the inspirational for the aspirational

All that money – but is he happy?

are guided through the six-step plan to get the best car for the budget. In fact just about the only thing it doesn't do is let you drive the cars online, although they're probably working on that as well...

JamJar.com

www.jamjar.com

★★★★

There are few places where you can actually order a car online, but JamJar.com (a Direct Line company) is one. You're guided through all you need to do to get your car at a reasonable price, whether you want it new, used or imported. If you've already got a car, you can use it in part-exchange for the one you really want. You're then gently pointed towards insurance and finance options as well, so you can do it all without having leave your screen. Handy.

Oldtimer London

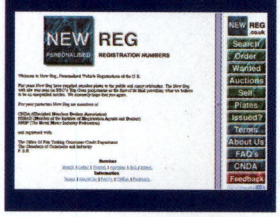
www.oldtimer.ndirect.co.uk ★★★

Owning and driving a classic car has its advantages: you get noticed; if your motor is old enough you become tax exempt; and you get to attend car rallies in Eastbourne. Oldtimer London is the place to go if you're after a classic or sports car: Bentleys, Lincolns and Ferraris are all up for grabs. And if you can't drive, there's always the miscellaneous section for memorabilia and, bizarrely, Penny Farthings.

PRIVATE NUMBER

Gold plated

Right, you've got the wheels, but what about the registration number? There are few things in life more swank than driving round with a private plate and, with help from the Interweb, you can: head for *www.newreg.com* and search for a suitable plate. As we went to press 55 TOM was up for sale at £14,000, and the wonderfully unadulterated IT 1 was yours for – wait for it – a mere £193,000. Bargain.



Office of Fair Trading

www.oft.gov.uk/html/cars/home.htm

★★★

Apart from your house, buying a car is probably one of the biggest investments you'll ever make. So to make sure no potential Arthur Daley sells you a pup, have a look at this site from the Office of Fair Trading before you take the plunge. There's information on everything from buying from a dealer to purchasing at auctions, as well as advice on how to deal with problems such as clocking. And if that all sounds a bit dull, then on your head be it if something goes wrong and you didn't read it.

Car Importing From Europe

www.carimporting.co.uk ★★★★

Kindly Mike Bilsborough (whose father's cousin's granddaughter is, apparently, Sporty Spice) has set up this site to advise anyone who's considering following the growing trend and buying a car from Europe. And very helpful it is too, with the latest import and price news, details of dealers in countries such as Holland, Belgium and Ireland, a beginner's guide to buying abroad, advice on how to get there and tales of bargains from across the water. And there you were thinking that Belgium is good for nothing at all...

Salesmen: lustrous

The Entrepreneur's Hall of Fame

www.itbn.com/halloffame.html

★★★★★

The North American Let's Talk Business Network pays homage to the rich and famous...and the not so famous, such as Mary Kay Ash who turned a $5,000 investment into a $2 billion cosmetics company. There are 19 entrepreneur's biogs, and if your favourite money-bags is missing you can nominate them for inclusion in the Hall of Fame.

Tough door policy: itbn.com

The Sunday Times Rich List

www.thetimes.co.uk/news/pages/info times/rich99/index.html ★★★★

Browse this superb online version of the Sunday Times Rich List for some fiscal inspiration. Together, the 1,000 Brits who made it onto the 1999 list were worth £115 billion and 709 of them are self-made.

Forbes The World's Richest People

www.forbes.com/tool/toolbox/billnew ★★★★

These are the world's *super*-rich. Pole position on the Sunday Times Rich List is Hans Rausing with an estimated worth of £3.4 billion, but the Tetra-Pak king comes in a poverty-stricken 34th on the Forbes' list. Still, nice for him to know who to invite round for dinner.

The Success Files

www.successfiles.com ★★★★

Interesting concept: a site selling the secrets of others' success. The self-proclaimed 'World Largest Achievement Archive™' flogs Successfiles™ – audio tapes which promise to reveal the 'success secrets and strategies of the world's most accomplished people'. Hours (or at least minutes) of fun but you might be better off playing Banana Lotto on the Net.

Andrew Carnegie – The World's Richest Man

www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/carnegie/

★★★★

On his death in 1918, this Scottish-born oil baron was said to be the richest man in the world, leaving £70 million to good causes. Here you can explore his life and watch excerpts from the documentary.

For more money sites, turn to Need To Know on page 105

YOU BUY A NEW CAR ONLINE. YOU COULD SAVE THOUSANDS. WE DELIVER IT STRAIGHT TO YOUR DOOR.

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jamjar.com Limited, 3 Edridge Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR9 1AG. *Delivery available in the UK only, excluding N.Ireland.

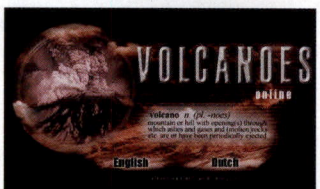
A whole lot of lava going on

Keep your distance from one of nature's great wonders by viewing the molten monsters online

Volcanoes.com

www.volcanoes.com ★★★★

Bookmark this and the volcanic world's your oyster, with links to individual volcano sites, both academic and personal (by volcanologists such as John P 'Jack' Lockwood, who's schlepped up a fair amount of lava-beaten track in his time). If you'd rather view 'em from your en-suite there are even volcano-related accommodation sites. Hawaii seems to offer spectacular stays – in the words of one lodge owner: 'We do volcanoes'.



Volcanoes Online: best place for them

Volcanoes Online

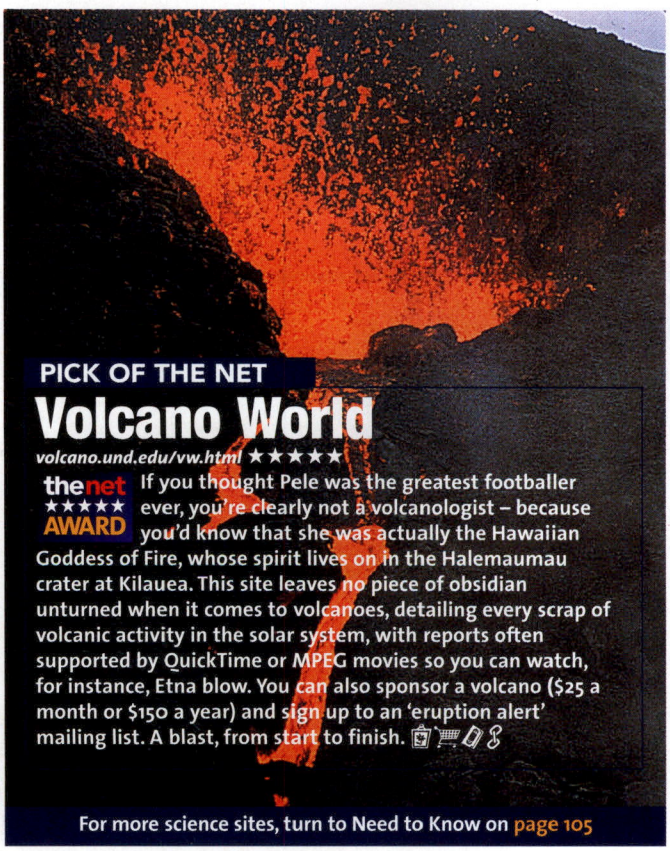
library.thinkquest.org/17457 ★★★

Created by teenagers for teenagers (or adults who are just beginning their exploration of the volcanic world), this is an excellent resource and a credit to the three little buggers who put it all together. Sections on plate tectonics will transport you back to the geography classroom but, like a lot of school subjects, it now seems bearable. You can also play the educational Save the Village game, but if it's online volcanic gaming you're after, head to ***www.volcano.com/game***. It's the site dedicated to disaster movie *Volcano*: pretend to be Tommy Lee Jones saving LA from lava in glorious Shockwave.

Volcano Photo Archive

www.doubledecker press.com ★★★

Some people risk their lives conquering volcanoes. Why bother, when you can travel from Olympus Mons on Mars to Old Faithful in Wyoming without leaving the desktop? This impressive archive of photographs gives essential pieces of info on each (ie: its most recent eruption), plus fascinating facts – apparently Olympus Mons is so big it could swallow the entire Hawaiian island of Maui in one gulp.



PICK OF THE NET

Volcano World

volcano.und.edu/vw.html ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

If you thought Pele was the greatest footballer ever, you're clearly not a volcanologist – because you'd know that she was actually the Hawaiian Goddess of Fire, whose spirit lives on in the Halemaumau crater at Kilauea. This site leaves no piece of obsidian unturned when it comes to volcanoes, detailing every scrap of volcanic activity in the solar system, with reports often supported by QuickTime or MPEG movies so you can watch, for instance, Etna blow. You can also sponsor a volcano ($25 a month or $150 a year) and sign up to an 'eruption alert' mailing list. A blast, from start to finish.

For more science sites, turn to Need to Know on page 105

WORDS: SUE WEEKES (SCIENCE), ROBERT JEFFERY (WEIRD); PICTURES: KOBAL, REX FEATURES

'What are you looking at, freak?'

Be king for a day

Create your own world and you can rule forever...

Micronations Today

www.micronations.f2s.com

★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

We've all invented imaginary worlds in our time, but for some the obsession never stops – and the Internet is a boon for those with big imaginations and limited social skills. Micronations Today collects the best of the Web worlds. Marvel at the detail and the delusions of grandeur – and don't forget to check out the Micronations Olympics, in which citizens compete against each other at... Yahoo! Bridge and Chess. Nurse, the screens!

The Kingdom Of Talossa

www.execpc.com/~talossa

★★★★★

The micronation that started the craze. In 1979, 'King Robert' created a new nation in his own bedroom. Today, there are hundreds of Talossans the world over, all subscribing to the same set of laws and the same language – 'Talossian English', which boasts 20,000 unique words, many of them derived from medieval English. They even have Talossan weather forecasts. Best of all, the Talossians are considering making Gloria Estefan their 'official entertainer'. No word on the Miami Sound Machine, sadly...

Kingdom Of Merovingia

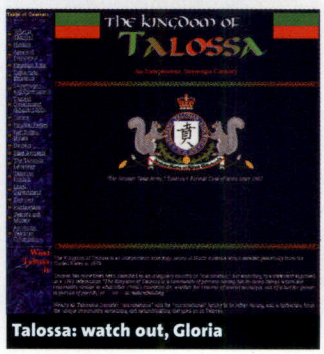
www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/5205/index.html ★★★

Many micronations extend no further than their rulers' bedrooms. Merovingia, however, has wider ambitions: King Remick Maxmillian (his real name) has established a Royal Navy of ships 'resting on the bottom of the Bikini Lagoon'. This man is the maddest of a mad line of micronation monarchs.

TorHavn

www.geocities.com/torhavn ★★★

TorHavn actually has a political point to make: by attempting to become 'The World's First Green Country', it's attempting to inspire others to become ecologically aware. That said, its rulers still dream of setting up a geographic idyll in which green citizens can live in harmony. Enter at your peril.



Talossa: watch out, Gloria

Evel Knievel had aged badly

Who's a clever boy?

Understand why Fido barks – then teach him to stay quiet and behave. Animal psychology explained...

Pet Behaviour Clinic
www.pethelp.net ★★★★

'Helping people and pets grow together,' is the laudable aim of this site, and one it well fulfils. Pethelp.net explains how your pet might behave and what you can do to help them – and, while there are no hands-on tutorials of the kind on offer elsewhere, it'll make fascinating reading for any pet owner.

Family Animal
www.familyanimal.com ★★★

Dr Larry Lachman has a rapport with animals – on his homepage is a happy golden retriever to prove the point. While much of the site is little more than a self-promotion exercise for Lachman's books and radio show, there is still breed-specific advice on dog behaviour and temperament, and plenty of training tips.

Perfect Paws
www.perfectpaws.com ★★★★

'Is My Dog Stupid Or What?', 'Help! My Dog Has An Attitude!', 'My Cat Is Driving Me Crazy!' – yes, it's the *Jerry Springer Show* for animals. But whatever your pet's problem, you'll find a plethora of answers on this

ELECTRONIC WHISKERS

Pretend pussy

Let's face it, owning a pet is a chore. There's the constant cleaning out, the huge vet bills and the endless clearing up. So why not take all the hassle out of keeping an animal with Virtual Kitty (*www.virtualkitty.com*)? Choose your moggy from the multitude on view, then play with your cyberpet, feed it and clean it out. Too little affection and it'll unfortunately die; too much exercise and it'll wear itself out. Still, you needn't feel any regret for your neglect – and it certainly beats carrying a Tamagotchi round in your pocket all day.

BEST ANIMALS SITES ★★★★★

where can I?

HELP WITH ANIMAL RIGHTS?
www.rspca.org.uk Those people who care for neglected animals.
www.animalaid.org.uk The online home of the animal rights group.
animalconcerns.netforchange.com News and loads of links to animal welfare sites.

BUY PET SUPPLIES?
www.petplanet.co.uk Kit your pet out with toys and accessories.
www.pet-pyjamas.co.uk Home to some of the weirdest pet merchandise you could hope to find.
www.petz.co.uk Everything your animal companion needs, with most deliveries guaranteed in 24 hours.

VISIT ONLINE ZOOS?
www.howletts.net
Take a virtual tour round this wildlife park.
www.si.edu/natzoo Award-winning, humourous site that is perfect for kids.

LEARN HOW TO CARE FOR MY PET?
www.avma.org/care4pets
Get some excellent tips and advice from American vets on how to look after your pet.
www.bsava.co.uk/petzone/welcome/welcome.htm The official British Small Animal Veterinary Association's site, with in-depth tips on caring for all your little friends.

Care for your pet American-style at the AVMA

FIND A NEWSGROUP?
rec.pets.cats.health+behav
Having trouble with your feline housemate? Find help here.

GET CHATTING?
www.wolfweb.com.au/barking
Share photos, anecdotes and care tips with other dog lovers.

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY (ANIMALS), PAUL WINSLOW (KIDS); PICTURES: KOBAL, REX FEATURES

CHILDRENS' BOOKS

Shut up and read!

Looking for a tome to entertain the kiddies? Do your research on the Web

Enid Blyton Ltd

www.blyton.com ★★★

Enid Blyton was responsible for many favourites, including *The Famous Five*, *The Secret Seven* and *Noddy*. The site is aimed at kids but although it's colourful and fun, it's not always immediately obvious what's going on. Mind you, kids were always better with this new-fangled technology.

Paddington Bear

www.paddingtonbear.co.uk ★★★★

The site itself is a bit corporate, but you can't fail to be won over by the little bear who was left alone on Paddington station (hence the name). There's a recap of the story behind the bear and information on Michael Bond as well as fun and games for the kids. And who wouldn't want to send a Paddington postcard?

Winnie The Pooh and Pals

www.winniethepooh.co.uk ★★★

Is anyone feeling nostalgic yet? That's good, because *Winnie the Pooh* is another timeless classic. With his friends Christopher Robin (based on author AA Milne's own son), Tigger and the rest he had fun and enjoyed fantastic adventures. Relive some of the best without leaving your browser, and if the kids are feeling up to some work in the kitchen, Owl's recipes are here for your culinary delight.

Roald Dahl's Chocolate Factory

www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Academy/4613 ★★

When he wasn't writing *Tales of the Unexpected* or adding his expertise to *You Only Live Twice*, Roald Dahl produced children's classics aplenty, including *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *The BFG* and *Fantastic Mr Fox*. Not bad for someone whose English school report declared: 'He seems incapable of marshalling his thoughts on paper'. This site isn't the best, but will help (it includes a biography and plenty of 'Wonka facts') until ***www.roalddahl.org*** appears again.

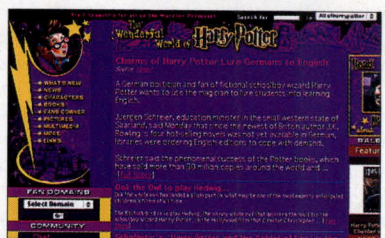
PICK OF THE NET

The Harry Potter Network

www.fandom.com/harrypotter ★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

There are loads of Web sites dedicated to J.K. Rowling's ridiculously popular series of books about Harry Potter, the public schoolboy who is magically transported into a world where he is a wizard. Most of them seem to be written in a foreign language, however, although it probably makes sense if you've read the books and are up on the lingo. The quality here shines through anyway, and you'll soon be able to tell you Slytherin from your Gryffindor... if you really need to know that sort of thing.



Whisk yourself to the world of Harry Potter

PICK OF THE NET

'God, I hate working with amateurs'

Training Your Dog

www.trainingyourdog.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

A huge mini-site from the excellent learnfree.com empire, Training Your Dog works on a similar principle to the other sites in the oeuvre, offering a selection of free streamable high-quality video clips to illustrate the topic under discussion. Which, in this case, is canine obedience: watch as the fantastically named 'Clint' the dog learns to 'stay', and 'Rodeo' stays 'down' at his owners' mealtime. It's almost as if Barbara Woodhouse never left our screens. Walkies!

site, which collates excerpts from a number of pet behaviour books covering the most common cat and dog complaints. And yes, your dog probably is stupid.

Yelpline

animal.discovery.com/yelpline/yelpline.html ★★★

In the States, animal psychology is big business. The Discovery Channel, the brains behind this site, has no fewer than four such shows every week, including the enticingly named *Breed All About It* and *Emergency Vets*, a sort-of *ER* meets *Animal Hospital*. Find out what's on when here, or peruse the library of behaviour-related articles.

Doggie Door To Canine Behaviour

www.doggiedoor.com ★★★

Sensible advice on canine training and psychology, with plenty of links and a helpful community for owners. Fine, but tucked away in the corner is a little feature about the 'Dog Scouts Of America Dog Camp 2000' featuring pictures of dogs in woggles. And uniforms. Would you really trust your pooch's health to people like this?

The tantric mushroom refused to give up its spoors

For more kids sites, turn to Need To Know on page 105

'That's another fine mess...'

How to get yourself a new shelf, a new bathroom – or a new bruise

Screwfix Direct
www.screwfix.com ★★★★★
If you're after a screw (oh *behave*), this is the place to be. This excellent site is also handy for ordering nails, drills, door furniture, lighting and tools at reasonable prices. Useful search, regularly updated database and best of all, your DIY gear will be delivered the next day – which means you can put your feet up again until tomorrow comes.

DIY Net
www.diynet.com ★★★★
There's step-by-step instructions for projects such as Wallpaper Basics, Repairing Hardwood Floor or, for the man at home, Staining. You can also chat about dilemmas. For example: 'Any ideas for taking indentation out of carpeting after moving furniture?' Reply: 'Steam will bring it up, or spray a little water on it and brush.' Fascinating.

Jewson
www.jewson.co.uk ★★★
From paint through to bricks, timber to tool hire, Jewson's site offers 3,500 products for next-day delivery. Better for the building-trade type of DIY gear – that is, for professionals. So hang your arse out of your jeans, drink endless tea, grab a power tool and you'll be off like a true pro.

Focus Do It All
www.focusdoitall.co.uk ★★★★
Interior design expert Helen Carey and the fantastically named Tony Lush will give you the answers to DIY problems on this attractive site. Also has 80 Project Guides, with essentials as how to hang wallpaper without feeling like hanging yourself. It goes on about visiting their stores, though – not exactly the point of having a Web site.

Homes by Design
www.homesbydesign.co.uk ★★★
DIY hints covering a new topic each month are being built into a library to help DIYers in distress. Links are useful – the site's Shop Front section lists major DIY retailers and home improvement specialists. Don't miss the Products section, featuring new, unusual and innovative products for home design and decorating.

B&Q
www.diy.co.uk ★★★
B&Q's site has got the lot: 40,000 products, from adhesives to wall-coverings. It's grabbed the best DIY Web address and would have collared the best site award... were it not for the fact that you have to walk to their nearest shop with your shopping list. They plan to have online ordering by this year; too late for this article, though...

DIY hints at homesbydesign.co.uk

Fourwalls
www.fourwalls.co.uk ★★★★
A quick, simple site with excellent links and a search system. From

Learn how to hang wallpaper without feeling like hanging yourself

D.I.Y.? D.O.N.'T.

Save me, Internet!

'Do it yourself? Destroy it yourself more like,' despaired the kid in the animated advert as his father played out the bungling comic stereotype of a butter-fingered break/drop everything in sight moron to perfection. But if our sites are responsible for tempting you into a *You've Been Framed* moment, you might find help on the Web. Many of the sites have help sections, while *DIY SOS* (*www.bbc.co.uk/diysos*) might be able to right the wrongs you have inflicted upon your home. However, despite everything, you may have to call in the professionals: *www.buildersnet.co.uk* will point you to the nearest hefty bloke in a checked T-shirt who can tut and inform you that 'You've had some right cowboys in here, mate'. And if, despite your efforts, you inflict more damage on yourself than the lounge, you might want to note the URLs of Ask The Doctor (*www.ask-the-doc.com*) or even Bupa (*www.bupa.co.uk*).

BEST HOME & GARDEN SITES ★★★★★

where can I?

GO ELECTRIC?
www.buyelectricaldirect.co.uk
Online suppliers of home entertainment and domestic appliances at discounted prices – plus free delivery in the mainland.

GET BLINDS?
www.easyblind.co.uk
Scupper the enjoyment of your nosey neighbours with made-to-measure blinds. Check out the Special Offer section too.

GET THE PERSONAL TOUCH?
www.jim-lawrence.co.uk
Specialises in curtain poles, door handles, wall lights, kitchen and bathroom fittings and table lamps using traditional blacksmith's skills.

GO FOR PLUMBING?
www.plumbworld.co.uk
Put an end to leaking faucets and tacky accessories with well-priced plumbing goods. Includes a 60-day money-back guarantee and free shipping for most of the UK.

GET CLEANING TIPS?
www.howtocleananything.com
Just in case you make a mess while dabbling in DIY.

FIND INSPIRATION?
www.misterfixit.com
This site offers expert repair advice for low prices.
www.naturalhandyman.com
US site with tips and ideas. You can email to ***Subscribe@naturalhandyman.com*** to get on a mailing list offering home help and humour.

CHAT TO OTHERS WHO ARE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES
www.doityourself.com
Reckons to be the first and leading Net community offering an ABC of DIY.
www.remodelonline.com
For an A-to-Z of yankee-doodle-dandy-style home improvements.

FIND BARGAINS?
www.wilko.co.uk
Just a list of Wilkinson products really, but for those on a budget you can't beat Wilko's cheap prices – though you do have to go and get them.

Hot tips for horticultural hipsters at www.e-garden.co.uk

GO GREEN?
www2.garden.com
Log on here to get some clever garden tips that will make others green with envy.
www.e-garden.co.uk
Modern gardening site with a sense of humour in places, plus tips, news and shopping.

WORDS: DAVID HURST; PICTURES: KOBAL COLLECTION

Construction of the lavatorial catapult reached a critical point

fabrics and paints to appliances and ornaments, you'll be able to find whatever you need to transform your place into a palace. All listed sites are e-commerce friendly.

Dig-it.co.uk

www.dig-it.co.uk ★★★★

'Instant gardens': they'll deliver your shrubs, plants or accessories – all you have to do is plant and then impress everyone with your landscaped lawn. Check the What's New in the World of Gardening section so you can be the life and soul at trendy parties.

DIY Fixit

www.diyfixit.co.uk ★★★★

Want loads of DIY information on the most obscure subject? Look no further than this lively, cartoon-tastic site. Tiling seems to be a speciality, with endless info from grouting to cutting. Then there's tips on how to cope with broken glass, how to hang a door and how not to slip up on worn stairs. If only Buster Keaton had had the Net.

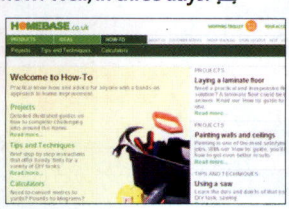
PICK OF THE NET

Homebase

www.homebase.co.uk ★★★★★

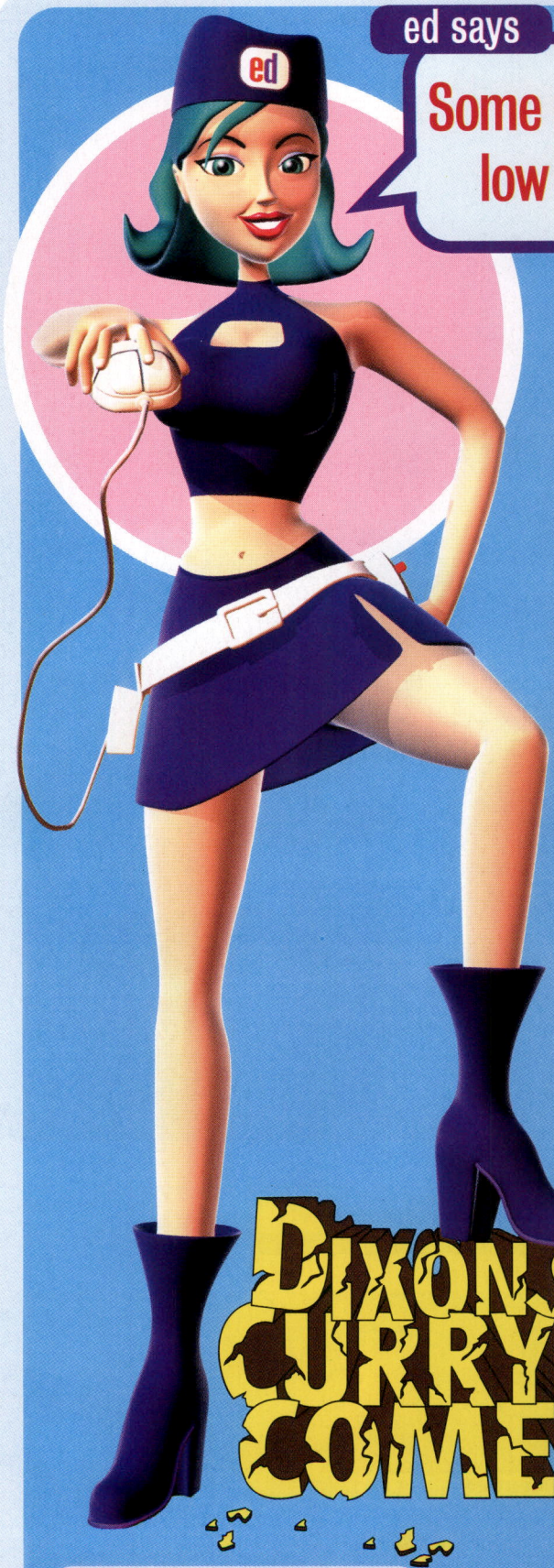
thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Choose from 5,000 DIY products seven days a week 24 hours a day, from curtain poles to lawnmowers. This site also tells you how to do the seemingly home-improvement impossible, step-by-step projects and tip-top techniques. Use its interactive calculators to work out imperial-to-metric for area and volume, and there's also a reliable search facility. Orders placed before 12 noon should arrive within three days, so convert that kitchen now! Well, in three days.



ed says

Some people are unhappy about our low on-line prices. Guess who?



If you're still buying your electrical products on the high street, you're wasting your time and money. Shopping on-line with empiredirect.co.uk is quicker, easier and you could save up to 30% on the electrical items you buy.

- Take a look at the top brand names we stock.

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PENTAX | PHILIPS | PIONEER | ROTEL | SAMSUNG | SANYO | SHARP | SONY
TANNOY | TECHNICS | THOMSON | TOSHIBA | YAMAHA | AEG | ARISTON
BELLING | BOSCH | CANDY | CREDA | DYSON | ELECTROLUX | HOOVER
HOTPOINT | INDESIT | LEC | NEFF | PARKINSON COWAN | SERVIS | SMEG
TRICITY-BENDIX | VAX | WHIRLPOOL | ZANUSSI

- Shopping on-line is fast, convenient and most importantly, 100% secure.
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'You only need a little squirt'

The Net's never smelt better with these scented sites

The Perfume Shop

www.theperfumeshop.com ★★★

The online shop of the high street chain doesn't have many surprises up its (undoubtedly) scented sleeve, but the savings can be impressive and it's well worth a visit for these alone. As of writing, Versace's Blonde Eau de Toilette, 100ml, was on sale for £19.99, down from £56. Now that's what we call a bargain.

Yes! Perfume for Men

www.internology.com/phero/index.html ★

'Yes! Unleash the Scent of Sex'. The Pheromone Sex Attractant Perfume for Men contains – funnily enough – male human pheromones, and what potent little things they are. Not only will they 'sexually attract and seduce women instantly', they 'stir sexual desire in them'. Blimey – and there's more. 'You will have more eye contact, more conversations, more dates, and more SEX with women than you ever thought you could'. All this for only $24.95 for a month's supply. Use it wisely.

The Soap Opera

www.thesoapopera.com ★★★★

Can't afford one of those designer pongs? Then make your own at The Soap Opera online store. It's all quite simple, apparently – just purchase the perfume base, essential perfume oils and bottles and mix. If your creation is more akin to drains than daisies, the site also has 'hundreds of famous designer perfume formulas' for you to rip off.

Coco Chanel

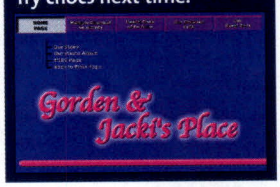
www.britannica.com/bcom/magazine/article/0,5744,205474,00.html ★★

When asked what she wore in bed, Marilyn Monroe famously replied, 'Chanel No.5' – and sealed the glam image of what is perhaps the most well-known fragrance in the world. Launched by Coco Chanel in 1923, it was the first ever perfume to bear the name of a designer, with the 'No.5' either – depending on where you read it – because it was the fifth version she tested or because it was her lucky number. Find out more here.

ANTI-PERFUMISTS

Gorden & Jacki

Does Chanel bring your girlfriend out in a chronic rash? Is she claiming it was some cheap rip-off alternative you bought her? Well maybe, like Jacki, she's allergic to many everyday chemicals – a prime offender being perfume. She and hubby Gorden's homely site (pics for wedding, pets etc) at ***www.our littleplace.com***, is the olfactory product's equivalent of the health warning on cigarette packs. Try chocs next time.



Beryl's scratch and sniff act was legendary

PICK OF THE NET

Fragrance Direct

www.fragrancedirect.co.uk ★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Lots of information on the wearing of perfume (more complicated than you might imagine) and good savings on the stuff at this jolly little site. Helpful tips include having several different perfumes for different occasions and seasons – summer needs light, floral fragrances while a heavier scent is better for winter, apparently – and you are told not to rub a fragrance on your skin as 'this will only bruise or smudge its effect'. Prices are good, with excellent discounts for stock that's not 'perfect' (no lids or boxes): one offer we spotted was Hugo Woman by Hugo Boss for £29.99, saving a generous £20.

BEST FASHION SITES ★★★★★

where can I?

BUY CLOTHES ONLINE?

www.tops.co.uk Get all the latest goodies from Top Shop and Top Man without having to go there.
www.next.co.uk/index.shtml As above, but with a sleeker design.
www.designerheaven.co.uk Where you can buy well-known men's brands online.

FIND THE LATEST FASHION NEWS?

www.fashion-icon.com Ranging from street style to interiors – find all the latest trends here.
www.fashion-planet.com Hard-hitting features from the fashion world.
www.fbia.com The Fashion and Beauty Internet Association's hub of fashion info.
www.cnn.com/style Well-informed fashion news, including video clips.

Stay afloat at www.fashion-icon.com

SEE THE LATEST FASHION SHOWS?

www.firstview.com/home.html Gaze in wonder at thousands of pictures from those latest and greatest catwalk collections.
www.fashion.net/shows View videos of all the latest fashion shows as they roll off the catwalk.
www.ftv.fr Catch those crazy catwalk shows broadcast daily on RealVideo.

READ FASHION DOS AND DON'TS?

www.manslife.com/clothes If you think men's fashion is an oxymoron, visit soon.
www.beautynet.com Having a bad hair day? Run out of ideas for improvement? Drop by this site for advice.
www.cosmomag.com Get the tips straight from the horse's mouth.

GET AN ONLINE MAKEOVER?

www.changeslive.com One of the best online makeovers we found. Upload a digital photo of yourself and create a whole new you.
www.makemeover.com Change your image today by simply using a photograph.
www.virtualmakeover.com Buy the software you need to create a new look.

JOIN A NEWSGROUP?

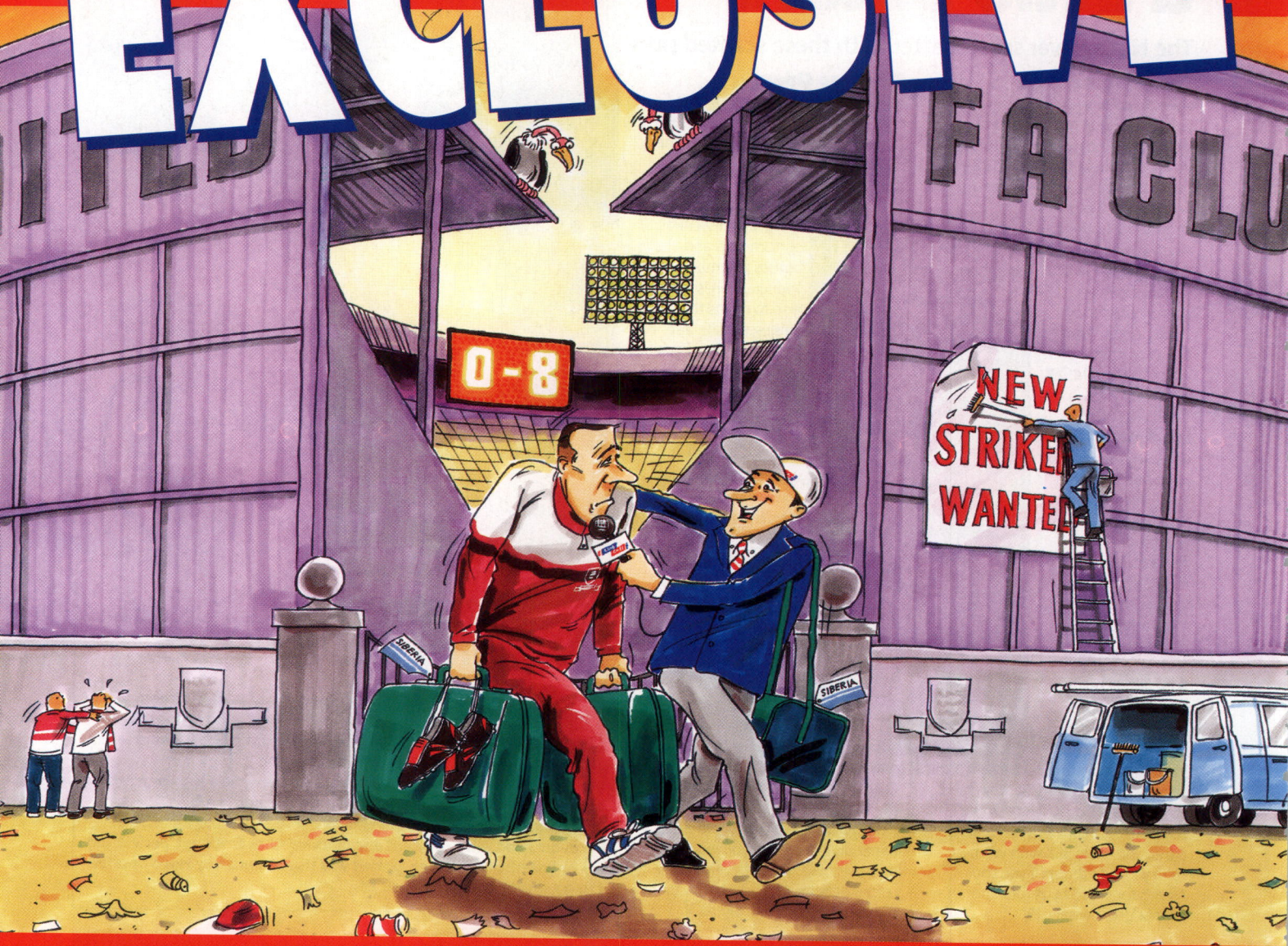
alt.fashion Find out what people are saying about perfume and the fashion world in general.

GET CHATTING?

www.longlostperfume.com/llpchatclub.html Lament about a long-gone scent.

WORDS: CLAIRE MCHATTIE; PICTURES: CHANNEL 4

TRANSFER NEWS EXCLUSIVE



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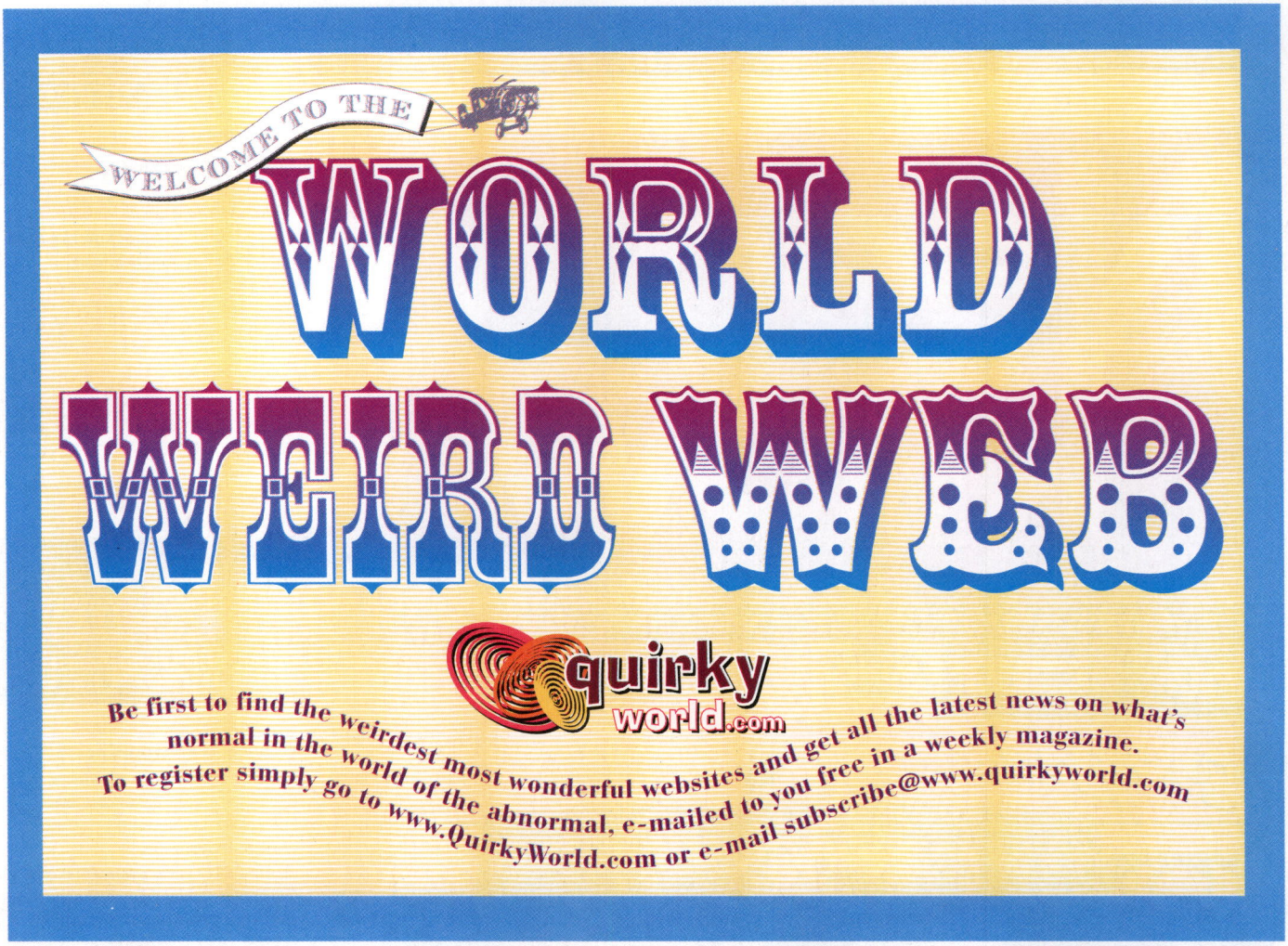
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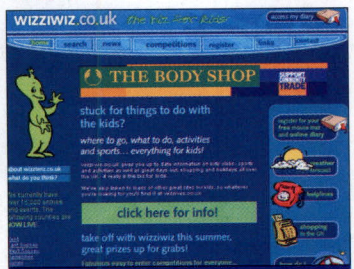

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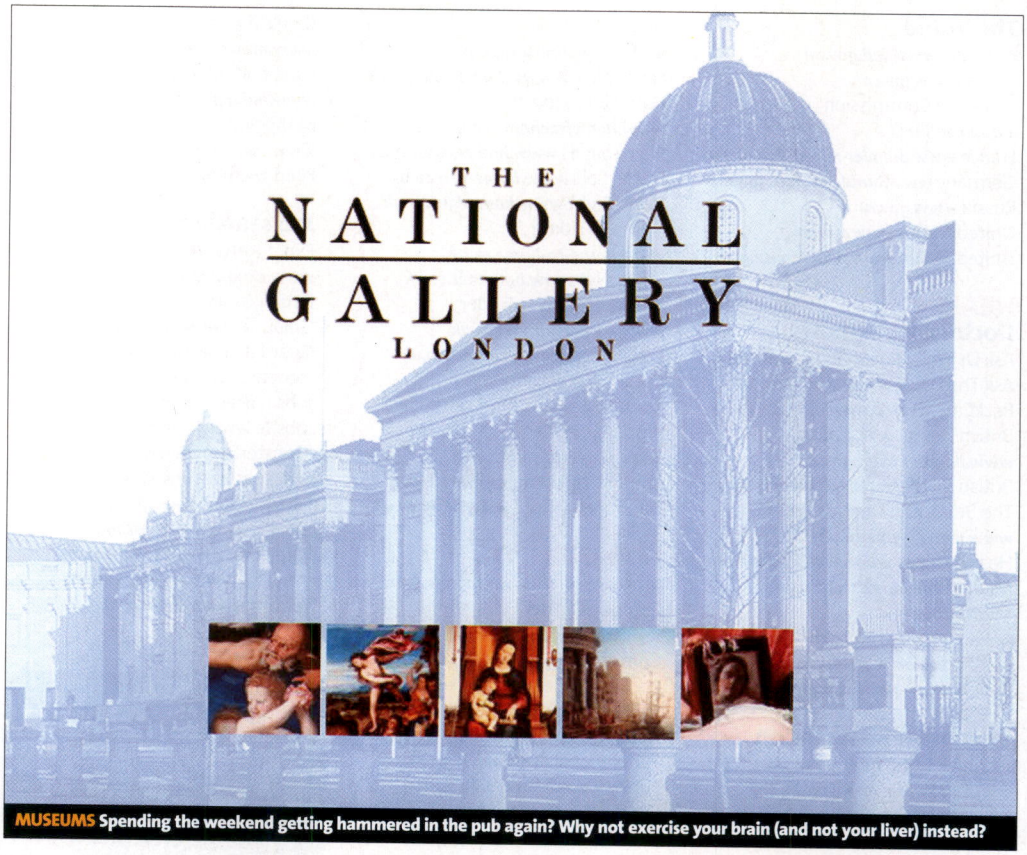

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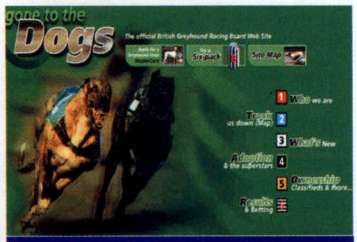
Fishing **www.anglersnet.co.uk**
Football **www.football365.com**
Golf **www.golfweb.com**
Hockey **www.fieldhockey.com**
Martial Arts
www.martial-arts-network.com
Motorsport **www.autosport.com**



GREYHOUND RACING
www.thedogs.co.uk
For a unique night out, why not go to the dogs? This fresh-looking site provides information on all the tracks in the country, scores and tips on buying your own greyhound.

Motorbike Racing
www.motograndprix.com
Racing **www.racingpost.co.uk**
Rugby League **www.rleague.com**
Rugby Union **www.scrum.com**
Skiing **www.complete-skier.com**
Snooker **www.snookernet.com**
Tennis **www.tennis.com**
Wrestling **www.wwf.com**

STYLE & FASHION
Main sites
BeautyLink **www.beautylink.com**
Cosmopolitan **www.cosmomag.com**
Fashion And Beauty Internet
Association **www.fbia.com**
Fashionfile **www.fashionfile.co.uk**
Fashion Mall **www.fashionmall.com**
FashionNet **www.fashion.net**
Haburi **www.haburi.co.uk**
Models.com **www.models.com**
Salonweb **www.salonweb.com**
Style Experts **www.stylexperts.com**
Vogue **www.vogue.com**

TELEVISION
Top shows
Big Breakfast
bigbreakfast.channel4.com
Brookside **www.brookie.com**
Coronation Street
www.coronationstreet.co.uk
EastEnders
www.bbc.co.uk/eastenders
Friends **friends.warnerbros.com**
Hollyoaks **www.hollyoaks.com**
Neighbours **www.neighbours.com**
Jerry Springer **www.universalstudios.com/tv/jerryspringer**
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?
www.phone-a-friend.com
X-Files **www.thex-files.com**

TV companies
BBC **www.bbc.co.uk**
Channel Four **www.channel4.co.uk**
Channel Five **www.channel5.co.uk**
ITV **www.itv.co.uk**
ONdigital **www.ondigital.co.uk**
Sky **www.sky.co.uk**

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Britannia **www.britanniaairways.com**
BA **www.british-airways.com**
BM **www.iflybritishmidland.com**
Buzz **www.buzzaway.com**
Continental **www.flycontinental.com**
Easy Jet **www.easyjet.com**
Go **www.go-fly.com**
Iberia **www.iberia.com**
KLM **www.klmuk.com**
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Qantas **www.qantas.com.au**
United Airlines **www.ual.com**
Virgin Air **www.virgin-atlantic.com**

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Australia **australia-online.com**
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Germany **www.germany-tourism.de**
Greece **www.areianet.gr/infoxenios**
India **www.indiagov.org**
Ireland **www.irelandseye.com**
Italy **www.travel.it**
Japan **www.jnto.go.jp**
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www.packyourbags.co.uk
Portugal **www.portugal-web.com**
Ski Club Of Great Britain
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Spain **www.red2000.com**
UK **www.visitbritain.com**
US **www.go-unitedstates.com**

Ferries
Ferry Savers **www.ferrysavers.co.uk**
P&O **www.poef.com/poef/index.htm**
Travel Britain **www.travelbritain.com/UKPassengerFerries.html**
Travel.World
www.travel.world.co.uk/ferries.htm

Rail travel
Euro Railways
www.eurorailways.com
Great Eastern Railway **www.ger.co.uk**
Great Western Trains
www.great-western-trains.co.uk
Railtrack **www.railtrack.co.uk**
Scotrail **www.scotrail.co.uk**
Trainline **www.thetrainline.com**
UK Public Transport Information
www.pti.org.uk
Virgin Trains **www.virgintrains.co.uk**

Travel agents
Airtickets **www.airtickets.co.uk**
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Internet Travel Services
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Last Minute **www.lastminute.com**
Leisure Planet
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STA Travel **www.statravel.co.uk**
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www.thefirstresort.com
Thomas Cook
www.thomascook.co.uk
Thomson
www.thomson-holidays.com
Trailfinders **www.trailfinder.com**
Travel Choice **www.travelchoice.co.uk**
Travelocity **www.travelocity.com**

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Digital Camera Network
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Earthcam **www.earthcam.com**
Webcam Central
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WebCam World
www.webcamworld.com
Webviews **www.webviews.co.uk**

FAVOURITES
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Howletts Zoo **www.howletts.net**
Interactive Model Railroad
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Jennicam **www.jennicam.org**
Radio 1
www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/inside_r1
Ultimate Taxi **www.ultimatetaxi.com**
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Cybersnoop **www.pearlsw.com**
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Net Nanny **www.netnanny.com**
Xcheck **www.xcheck.net**

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4anything **www.4anything.com**
AOL Netfind **www.aol.com/netfind**
Excite **www.excite.com**
Infoseek **infoseek.go.com**
Liszt (mailing lists)
www.liszt.com
LookSmart **www.looksmart.com**
Open Directory **www.dmoz.org**
Thomson Directories
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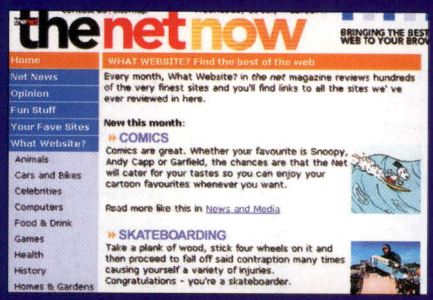
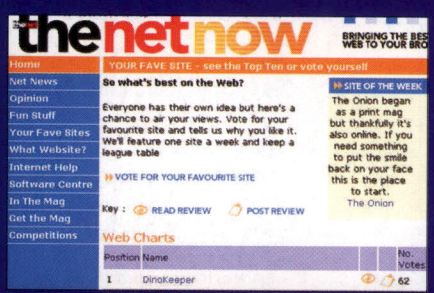
THE NET NOW

IT'S THE BEST OF THE WEB, BROUGHT TO YOUR BROWSER



WHAT WEBSITE?

Find links to every Web address we mention here



FAVOURITE SITES

Your chance to vote for the best site on the Web

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COURTESY OF SHORT BREAKS DIRECT

LAUGH AT THE FUNNIEST EMAIL JOKES

LINK TO THE HOTTEST SITES ON THE WEB

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READ THE LATEST CONSUMER NET NEWS

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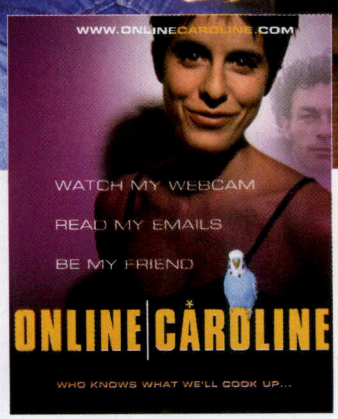


Pounds, shillings and sense

The Freeserve Money channel helps your finances

16 pages that will change the way you use the Net

Welcome

Welcome to Freeserve, the UK's No. 1 for the Internet. Whatever you want from the Internet, you can get it on Freeserve. Our content is second to none, covering all the topics that you could want to read about. Whether you like shopping, motoring, entertainment or chat, you'll find all these and much, much more on Freeserve Today at *www.freeserve.com*. Freeserve is the Internet's leader for great content, but that's not all. Almost 2 million people are currently online as members of the nation's most popular Internet Service Provider (ISP) and portal – they're all part of one big community who enjoy the many benefits of being a Freeserve member.

What you'll get from Freeserve

Free access to the Internet

There are lots of ISPs that have in the past tried to introduce unmetered Internet access, and many have failed in the process. However, you can always rely on Freeserve not to make empty promises – and you can now get unmetered access through Freeserve. Freeserve never makes you pay any subscription charge. And Freeserve was the first UK ISP to successfully offer you a choice of Internet call packages, putting you in charge of your Internet call charges. No Ties Freeserve Time lets you pay as you go, charging a local rate for each call. Or you have the option of Off Peak Freeserve Time, which gives you unmetered access from 6pm until 8am during the week and all day at weekends – for just £5.99 per month. Or for £10 per month, you can have unmetered access 24 hours per day, seven days per week with Unlimited Freeserve Time. See ***www.freeserve.com/time*** for more information on all the options that Freeserve can offer you.

Email

Post can be slow, especially if you're waiting for something from abroad. However, email is different. It allows you to send and receive messages across the world in seconds. And with Freeserve, you don't have to pay a penny. When you sign up, you'll get an unlimited number of email addresses, free. Messages are free to send and receive; all you pay is the cost of the call to connect to the Internet.

And now you have even more choice, thanks to FSmail, our Web-based email service, which you can check anywhere in the world – you just need an Internet terminal! For more information, see page vi.

Communication options

Of course, there's always the danger with email that you might need to read your messages when you don't have Web access. But that needn't be a problem any longer. You can now be notified of your email on your mobile, thanks to Freeserve Alerts, which converts your messages to SMS. Or, if you have a mobile Internet (WAP) phone, you can receive your messages in full. ***www.freeserve.com/communications***

Talking email

Finally, there's Speechmail. This natty option allows you to access your email messages over the phone, without a computer. And as you would expect, there's absolutely no subscription charge for Freeserve members.

To access the service, sign up at the address below. You'll be given a phone number which you can use to access your mail. You can ring your number from any phone – including your mobile. So no matter how important the message, you won't need to be sat in front of a computer screen. ***www.freeserve.com/communications***

Web space

The Internet is a great invention in that it lets absolutely anyone stand up and put their opinions across. And you can do it too, with a little help from Freeserve.

As a Freeserve member we'll give you a massive 15Mb of space free in which to build your own Web site. You can make your site about absolutely anything that you like – it can be dedicated to your favourite pop star,

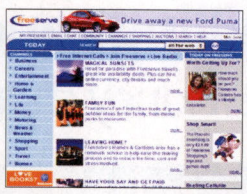
Freeserve: content suitable for all the family

CHANNEL GUIDE

Some of the great channels available on Freeserve

Today

Freeserve has always striven to provide the best content on the Web, and the Today channel has been styled with an exciting mix of topical content and features to enjoy. Go there today! ***www.freeserve.com***



Auctions

The thrill of bidding for items at bargain prices is no longer confined to auction rooms. By going to FSauctions at ***www.fsauctions.co.uk***, you can peruse the wide variety of merchandise on offer and place your bid. It's up to you to decide how high to go!

football team or even yourself! And the wealth of free programmes on the Freeserve sign-up CD make it easy to get your site up and running.

In fact, the only problem that you'll face will be when you try to decide what your site is going to be about!

Great Content

At Freeserve we don't just strive to bring you free Web space, unlimited free email addresses and a choice of Internet access packages. We're also dedicated to bringing you the very best content on the Internet and collecting it all under one roof: on the Freeserve Today page at *www.freeserve.com*.

To make the most of Today, make it your homepage on the Web and check it every day. That way you'll get a fantastic digest of all the latest news, weather and sport just as it happens – and the opportunity to explore the events more thoroughly on the relevant channels, of which there are many.

Freeserve for life

Freeserve isn't limited to hard news. Try the feature-packed Life channel, follow the stars with the Entertainment channel, plan a holiday with the Travel channel, or get talking on our Chat channel. If you have a small business you shouldn't miss the Business channel. Or there are Sport, Learning and Money channels, as well as the women's channel at iCircle.

Finally, the fortnightly newsletter will keep you up-to-date with all that's going on at Freeserve.

www.freeserve.com

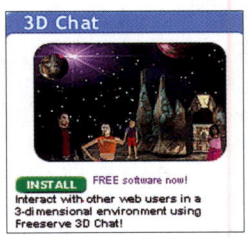
Sign up online at www.freeserve.com or pick up the CD at Dixons, Currys, PC World, The Link or @jakarta. It's free.

Business

Whether you've got an established business or are a newcomer, Clearlybusiness.com, associated with both Freeserve and Barclays, can help. It's a complete online resource aimed at reducing hassle as well as your costs!

Careers

You're wired, now get hired – not fired. The Careers channel lets you search databases of 70,000 jobs nationwide; you can apply online, or submit your CV and wait for employers in your area to come to you!



Chat

Our ever-popular chat service is a great hit. You can use our new 3D chat rooms to get around and explore virtual reality worlds, or even set up your own chatgroups.

Entertainment

The latest film and music releases are all on the Freeserve Entertainment channel. From Mozart to Moby and Antonioni to *Antz*, it's all in Entertainment.

Health

The Freeserve Health channel will help you stay in good order. The channel is packed full of information and advice on everything from herbal medicine through to the latest medical breakthroughs.

Tony Stone; Image Bank; Retna

Freeserve gets faster and faster

The phenomenon of ADSL looks set to completely change the way you use the Internet

The Internet just keeps on getting faster, and, as you'd expect from the UK's Number 1, Freeserve is totally committed to making sure that its members get the best access possible. FreeservePlus is the new high-speed Internet service from Freeserve. The business service for multiple PCs was recently launched, and FreeservePlus for single PCs will be available during September.

But what is all the fuss about? Well, FreeservePlus is a Broadband service, which means that it works a lot faster than a standard modem. As an illustration, most home modems operate at 56Kbps – that is, they transfer 56 kilobytes of information to your computer per second. FreeservePlus is capable of transferring data at anything up to 2 megabytes (2000 kilobytes) per second. That's nearly 40 times as fast as a 56K modem.

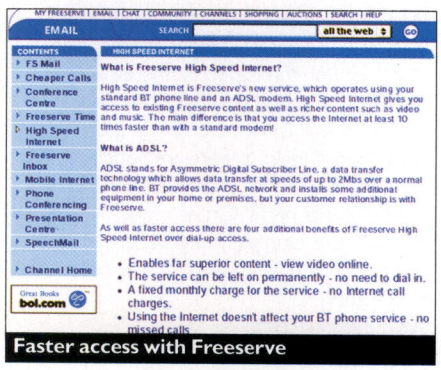
The general term 'Broadband' (as opposed to Narrowband, which currently most home users rely on) covers both ADSL access and the content that can be experienced with the service. There are several different platforms that can be used for Broadband access, including ADSL, cable modem, wireless and satellite. And Broadband doesn't have to be on a PC – in the future Broadband will be accessible via home devices such as televisions and mobile phones.

So, what are the benefits of using Broadband as opposed to Narrowband? Most Broadband connections work on a 'flat-fee' basis, which means that it doesn't matter if you leave your connection on for a long time, or even all the time – you will still be charged exactly the same amount. As such, the way you use the Internet will probably change – recent studies suggest that you could well start spending up to three times as long on the Web. Broadband connections are generally at least ten times faster than dial-up connections, which means that Web pages appear almost instantaneously – in other words, no waiting for pages to download – and if you have 'always-on' access then you won't have to wait for minutes to log on.

Having a fast connection has other advantages: while video and audio from the Internet are available with a dial-up connection, the quality is generally only average and is often fairly poor. Broadband, on the other hand, offers quality much like you'd experience on your television set. In the future Broadband will allow you to watch movies or listen to music at the touch of a button. And of course, if you are using Narrowband even the most basic software programme takes a while to download. With Broadband the whole world of software will become available to download online.

So, how does this apply to you? Freeserve is committed to Broadband in terms of providing both connections and content that makes the most of the service. FreeservePlus will be available for home users during September. Most importantly, Freeserve sees Broadband as the future, and Freeserve will still be the number one for the Internet when this happens.

www.freeserve.com/plus



Faster access with Freeserve

CHANNEL GUIDE

Some of the great channels available on Freeserve

Homes and Gardens

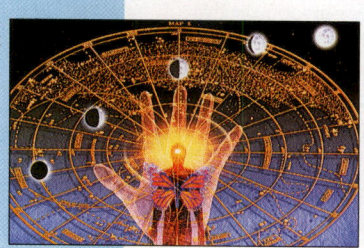
Everything you'll need to look after your home and garden is on the Freeserve Homes and Gardens channel; from maintenance, to advice on how to make moving house easier!

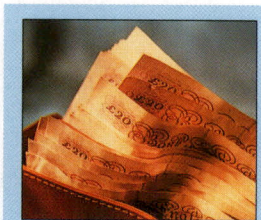
Learning

From SATS right through to A-level, Freeserve Learning is there to help you through your studies with an interactive learning environment to encourage learning skills. And now it's possible to take an online course, thanks to BlueU.com.

Life

The Life channel is an exclusive features magazine which brings you the latest lowdown on everything that matters, online and off. Whatever you're into, you'll enjoy Life.



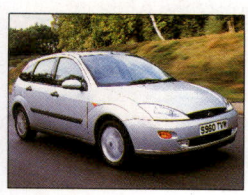


Money

Freeserve will help you keep your finances healthy with expert advice. Whether you want savings tips, a mortgage or advice on choosing an ISA, you can keep your pocket full with Freeserve.

Motoring

Get on the road with the new Freeserve motoring channel, which is your one-stop shop for everything car-related. You can buy your new car and arrange your insurance and finances online, with some great savings to be had.



Back to school

Let Freeserve help you prepare your children for their return to the classroom

Much to the relief of parents everywhere the long school holidays are now almost over, and it's time to return the children back to school. But before you pack their school lunches and kit them out in their uniforms, be sure to visit Freeserve to prepare them for all they are likely to encounter back at their desks.

The Freeserve Learning channel at *www.freeserve.com/learning* is full of content that will help schoolchildren get the advantage and the help with their schoolwork that they deserve. The Homework Solver does exactly what it suggests – takes 'the work out of homework'! Simply click on the age group of your child (there's help for children between Year 3 and Year 8), and you'll be presented with a list of subjects for which there is help available. Say, for example, that your child is 11 and in year 7, and he or she needs to find out information on English medieval history for a project at school that needs to be in the next day! Simply click on the Year 7 icon, followed by the history icon. There then follows lots of questions with detailed answers that should help with all your child's queries, tailored to suit the learning level they will be at. There are many other subjects to choose from, including science, geography and English. And the whole site is presented in a clear, fun, easy-to-use format which both kids and adults alike will enjoy using.

School work needn't be boring

Heavy reference books can cost a fortune and aren't very exciting for children to browse through – so why not make their learning interactive by using the Freeserve Reference Centre within the Learning channel? It contains as much information as many dusty text books, yet is fun to use. Containing a dictionary, encyclopaedia, atlas and media index, simply type a word into the powerful search engine and it will come up with masses of useful information, as well as related topics – just the thing to help with that essay about crop rotation!

If your child is having difficulty in finding information on a particular subject, why not guide them towards the Freeserve Communities channel, SmartGroups.com? Go to the homepage at *www.smartgroups.com* and enter a relevant word to see if there is already a discussion about the subject you are looking for information on. If not, you could help your child create a SmartGroup discussion about the topic of their choice, and see if anyone else out there can offer any advice.

And if you really can't find anything relevant at all, simply enter the subject in the box at the top of the Learning channel page and the powerful Freeserve search engine will trawl the Web for you, returning pages that are sure to help.

Freeserve can also help long-term by keeping your child up-to-date with the latest events happening in the world, on the Freeserve News channel. Visit the channel at *www.freeserve.com/news* to help keep them aware of current affairs across the globe.

Exams can be stressful for everyone, no matter what their age, so why not prepare your child by visiting the Freeserve Learning Exam Revision page? The site, which is supported by the National Association of Head Teachers, caters for everyone between the age of 8 and 18, and as well as offering exam-style questions and key revision points, gives lots of useful hints for revising and plenty of encouragement. Once again it's very clear and easy-to-use, and should help calm those exam nerves with its helpful tone.

Finally, we all want our children to have the latest books and software – so look no further than the Freeserve Shopping channel, at *www.freeserve.com/shopping*, for bargains in computer accessories and texts.

So there you have it – let Freeserve help your child get the most out school days!
www.freeserve.com/learning

News

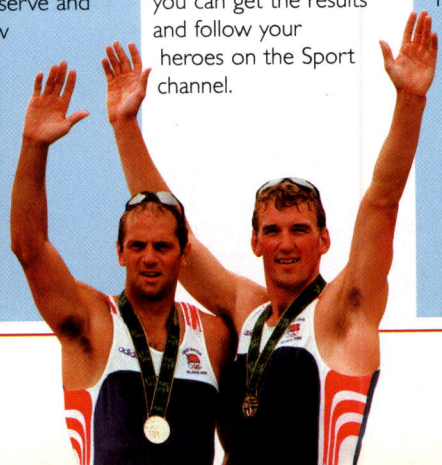
Get tomorrow's papers today with this superb news service. You'll get all the latest UK and foreign stories, together with business news and a complete rundown of headlines as they happen.

Shopping

The Freeserve Shopping channel can provide flowers or food, a car or a computer. Look out for great deals and savings from SHOP@freeserve and now the new Marketplace retailers.

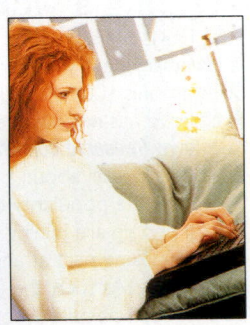
Sport

Whatever your sport, you'll find it on Freeserve. Football, tennis, cricket, rugby, Formula One, golf and this month the Olympics; you can get the results and follow your heroes on the Sport channel.



Travel

Click on the Freeserve Travel channel for instant access to a database of 70,000 flights and holidays worldwide. There are always sensational last-minute deals on offer.



Women

Web women need look no further than the Freeserve women's channel, iCircle.com, for the latest features, information and advice.

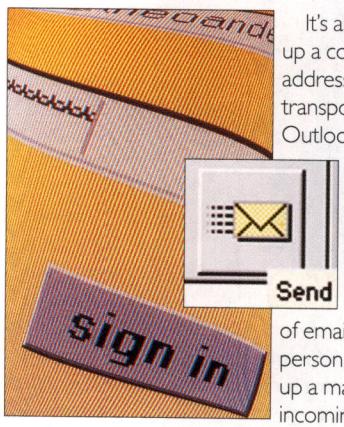
Retna; PA; Image Bank; Autocar

Make the most of email with Freeserve

There's a lot more you can do with your email account, thanks to some new FSmail features

Email is a wonderful invention, allowing you to keep in touch with friends around the world for next to no expense. But if you just use your FSmail account to read and send messages, you might be surprised to learn that there is actually a lot more you can do, thanks to some new and improved features on the service.

For example, it's quite possible that you'll have other email accounts elsewhere. Before this would have meant having to visit each site separately, having to type in different user names and passwords each time and costing both time and money. But if you have an email account with another ISP, you can now collect all your mail from that Inbox into your FSmail account, thanks to the handy new Remote Mail Fetcher.



It's also likely that you've built up a collection of contacts in your address book. It's now easy to transport them from Outlook or Outlook Express into your FSmail address book – how to do so is explained on the FSmail information page.

If you have subscribed to an email-based newsletter, or receive lots of emails from one specific person, then you might like to set up a mail filter to move all incoming email from a specific address into a pre-set folder, meaning you won't have to manually move your messages – useful.

If you type emails quickly, then the new FSmail spell-checker could come in very handy! Simply click on the 'Check Spellings' button and a new window will appear with mistakes highlighted in red. Alongside will also be a suggestion of how the word should be spelt!

Just about everybody experiences 'spam' email at some point – the electronic equivalent of junk mail. You can now block it by adding the address to your 'Block Senders' list – you won't receive email from that address again.

Afraid you'll miss emails while you are away on holiday? The FSmail Auto-Reply allows you to prepare an email that will be sent out to everyone who emails you while you are away. You could include a contact number, or simply the date of your return.

Finally, make sure you never run out of space again with the FSmail Mailbox meter, a small graphic indicating how much space you have left for your email.

For more details on the new features and to set up a free FSmail account, visit the FSmail site at *www.fsmail.net*.

freeserve
www.freeserve.com

Email is a great invention, letting you keep in touch around the world

NEW ON FREESERVE

Check out some of our great new features

Helping a worthy cause

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award celebrates its 45th anniversary next year and The Award is growing all the time, with around 100,000 young people joining up each year. Freeserve has now teamed up with the youth programme – see *www.freeserve.com/theaward* – to promote exactly what The Award is all about.

Such is the popularity of The Award that more and more young people are joining all the time, with a total of over 200,000 taking part at any one time. This number is increasing all the time. As such, the youth programme is looking to recruit adult helpers who can volunteer a little of their time – perhaps just one evening a week – to teach their skills to the young people participating in The Award. Young people doing the programme put millions of hours into the community, so help from adults can make a huge difference to a very worthwhile cause.

Anyone wishing to volunteer for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award should visit the site at the address below.
www.freeserve.com/theaward

Driving towards cold weather

Now that autumn is almost upon us, it's best to make sure your car is in good working order before the bad weather arrives. The new Freeserve Motoring channel, FSmotorist, at *www.fsmotorist.co.uk* can save drivers lots of money on repairs and parts, including clutches, batteries and gearboxes. Members can also save £16 on their MOT and get money off services – and the mechanics will come to you, saving the inconvenience of having to take your care to the garage and leaving it there.

If, on the other hand, you'd rather buy a new car, then FSmotorist can help with that too. Take a look at the 'Your next car' section to see the range that the channel can offer you, all at very competitive rates and with some great savings.
www.fsmotorist.co.uk

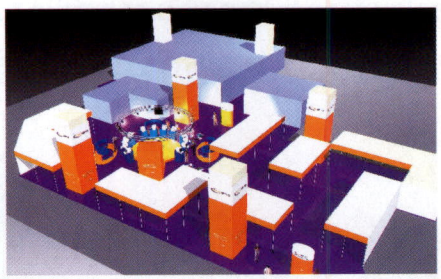
Freeserve brings the Internet to Live 2000

Use the Internet, bag a bargain or bowl against the Freeserve Speedster at Earl's Court this month

Get ready for the UK's biggest home entertainment, Internet and new technology show, Live 2000, which kicks off at Earls Court on 21 September. The show runs through to the 24 September.

Anyone who is interested in the latest Internet technology will find something to fascinate them at the show – and of course both Britain's biggest portal, Freeserve, and Britain's best-selling Internet magazine, ***thenet***, will be there. In a prominent position at the show will be the huge Freeserve truck, which was touring the country earlier in the year on the Freeserve Roadshow. On board will be over 20 laptops offering fast Internet connection via ISDN, so that both Freeserve members and those who haven't signed up yet will be able to have a go on the Internet, absolutely free of charge. And those who aren't members will be given the chance to join at the show, giving them access to all the benefits that Freeserve offers to its members, which now stand at nearly 2 million.

Also present on the Freeserve stand will be the Speedster, allowing both young and old alike to see how fast they can bowl a cricket ball. And world-class cricketer Darren Gough will be making a special appearance during the show! For those who haven't been following the Speedster competition, Freeserve is offering a prize of a whopping £100,000 if a bowler



LIVE 2000 EVENT

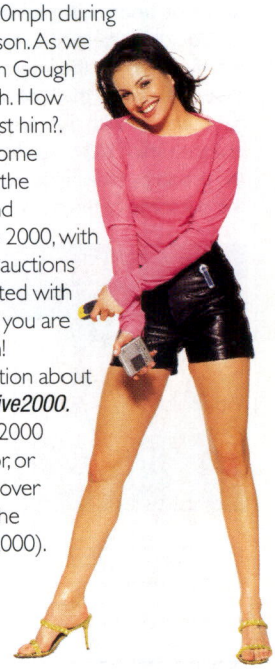
AUDIO · DVD · DIGITAL · GAMES · INTERNET · MOBILES

EARLS COURT, LONDON 21-24 SEPTEMBER

manages to reach 100mph during the international season. As we went to press Darren Gough had managed 93 mph. How would you fare against him?.

Freeserve offers some fantastic bargains on the Shopping channel, and continues this at Live 2000, with a 'Shopping Zone'. Fsauctions will also be represented with the 'Auction Zone' – you are sure to find a bargain!

For more information about the show, see ***www.live2000.com***. Tickets for Live 2000 cost £12 on the door, or just £10 if you book over the Web site or via the hotline (0870 736 2000). Children get in for just £7, or £5 in advance.

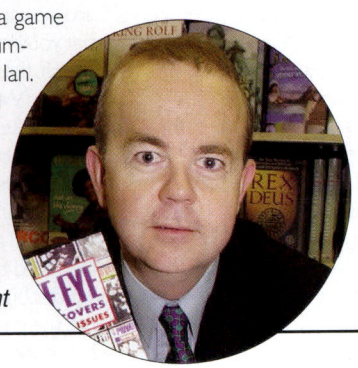


Have they got games for you

The satirical news-quiz ***Have I Got News For You*** has proved such a hit with viewers that it is shortly to return for yet another series. But fans of the show who can't wait till then needn't worry – they simply need visit the show's interactive Web site, featured on the Freeserve Entertainment channel, to get their daily fix.

All the favourites from the show are there, including partially blank headlines and photo captions to fill in as well as an interactive Odd One Out competition. In addition there are also animated clips, a Web-wide trivia game and soon there will be auditorium-style chats with Angus, Paul and Ian. The games vary in technological scope, and while some are updated weekly, many others change daily – so there will be something new to keep you amused every time you visit!

www.freeserve.com/entertainment



Love is in the air

Wedding bells are ringing at Freeserve, after Claire Vandervert and her fiance Brad were married after originally meeting in a Freeserve Chat room. The couple met at the end of last year through the rooms and began chatting every day, both over the Internet and on mobiles – sometimes until as late as three in the morning!

Brad, 30, who works in Oxford, came down to London on 5 February to visit Claire, 26, and ever since then the happy couple have barely been apart. He proposed to her on Valentine's Day, and the couple were married on 19 August at Leez Priory. They are currently on honeymoon in Bangkok, Melbourne, Sydney and Singapore. Both are absolutely over the moon and Claire describes their meeting as 'a fairy tale come true'. She thinks that chat rooms are a great place to meet people as it's easier to communicate with people you don't know and you can be selective with the information that you divulge.

Which just goes to show: Freeserve can change more than just the way you use the Internet – it can also change your life!

www.freeserve.com/chat

Image Bank; AutoCar; Newsmakers; Live 2000

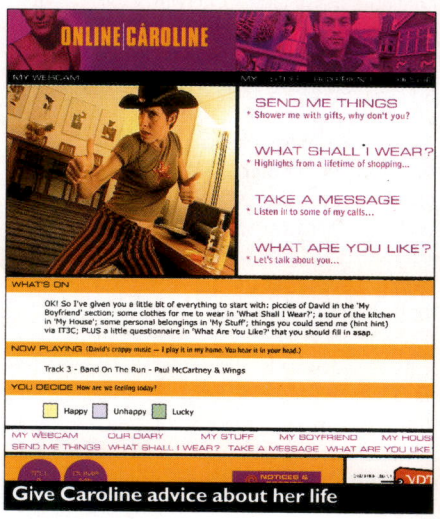
freeserve
www.freeserve.com

Web dramas

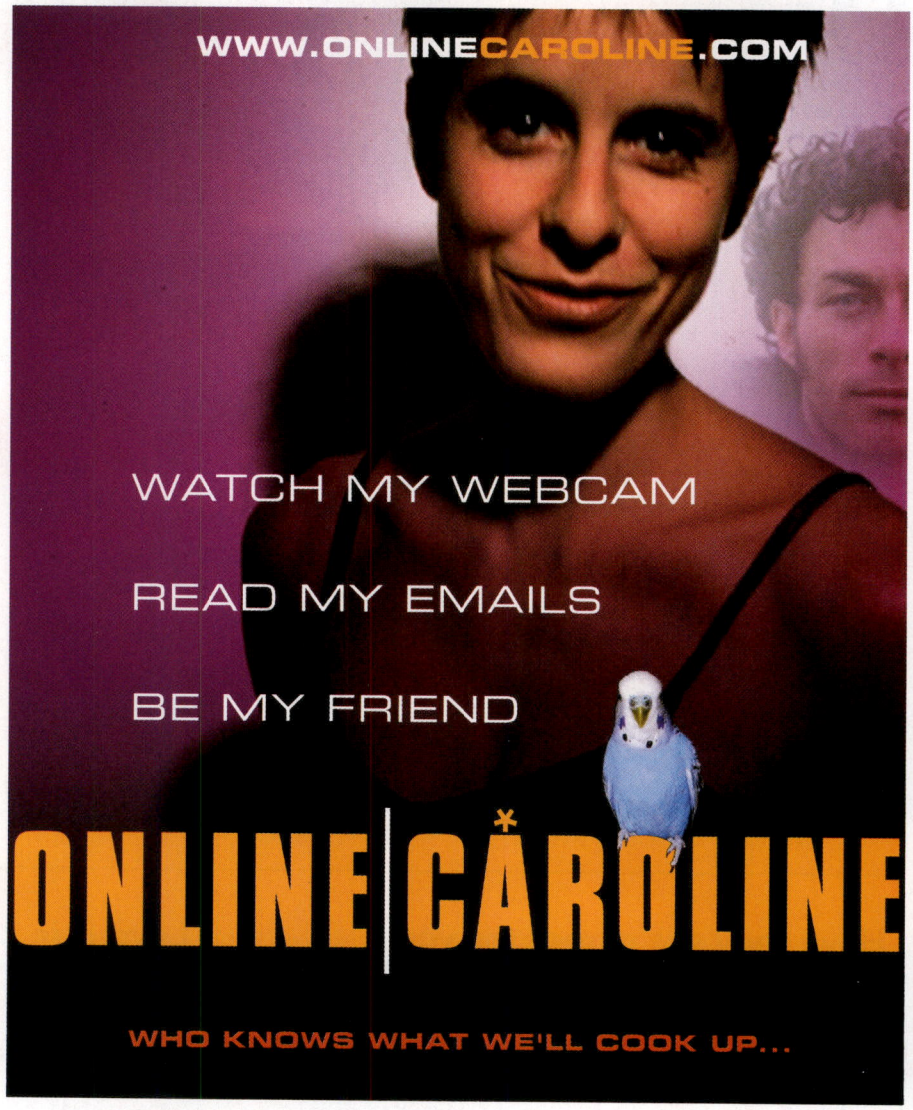
Why watch soap operas on the television when you can take part in one on Freeserve?

When the World Wide Web was created it was supposed to be a fully interactive medium. However, trawling the Internet often involves spending hour upon hour looking at other people's homepages and works of art, and not becoming involved at all.

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to become more involved in the Internet? Well, you'll be pleased to know that's now possible. Freeserve has come up with two fully interactive online dramas, which allow you to become part of the action by making decisions which affect the outcome of the story.



Give Caroline advice about her life



Caroline is online

The first, and the original, is Online Caroline. This online soap opera was originally launched by Freeserve at the beginning of the summer, but has proved so popular that it is back for a re-run! So if you missed it the first time around, this can be your opportunity to catch it again.

If you've ever watched a soap opera on television and thought that you could make a better job of the plot, then Online Caroline is your chance to do so. Online Caroline is a 24-part drama that has been specifically designed for the Internet by digital entertainment company XPT, and allows you to advise Caroline on her life and help her make decisions about what she is going to do, and generally work to become friends with her. The interaction is so realistic, it's just like chatting to a real person!

The star of the show is Caroline Close, a twenty-something travel writer who hardly ever travels any more because of a lack of work. Caroline has set up Web cams around her home in an attempt to relieve the boredom and the loneliness – her boyfriend David is currently away on an extended work junket in Africa. Caroline is also unsure about the relationship and has become annoyed over the fact that David is constantly going on about babies – 'I will take a LOT of persuading before I walk in the way of Cow & Gate,' says Caroline. She uses her Web site to give her something to do, as well as help her find a direction in life.

The action begins with Caroline introducing herself, and she expects you to do the same – when you first log on you are asked to fill in a questionnaire telling her all about your likes, dislikes and hobbies. This increases interactivity – Caroline can't write to you if she doesn't know what you like! As time goes on, and each time you visit, the action unfolds with a mixture of simulated Web cam feeds, personalised emails and audio telephone messages to listen to, revealing more and more of what is going on in Caroline's life. She will also show you around her house and let you look into her wardrobe, kitchen and at her photographs. You'll be introduced to her friends, her boyfriend and even her budgie. You can also help her choose what she is going to wear, and you can find out what music she is listening to when you visit!

First television: now there are online soaps as well

You can even send Caroline free gifts: for instance a bottle of vodka (her favourite tipple) or a CD that she might like. In return Caroline will email you reacting to what you have done and what you have chosen to look at on your last visit.

Every time you visit the site you'll discover a little bit more about Caroline's life, which, it turns out, is a bit more eventful than you might at first think. More and more plot developments occur each time you go to the site, and you have to help Caroline make more and more important decisions all the time. Each time you visit, the site updates to let you see the consequences on Caroline's life from the decisions you have made. One of the most impressive things about the site is that if you can't visit for a while it doesn't matter: you'll be able to continue where you left off. And the site is also very clear, easy to use and quick to download, even with the multimedia advantage of audio files and Webcams.

Be prepared for a few twists and turns along the way, though: Caroline's story starts out as the life of a typical twenty-something, concerned primarily with food, men, work and shopping, but you'll soon realise that there's an awful lot more to her than is visible at first glance. You'll be so intrigued at what might be revealed next that you'll find it very difficult not to keep coming back!

www.freeserve.com/entertainment

Send a free virtual present anywhere in the world with IT3C

Send a free gift

If you've been to the Online Caroline site, you'll know that it's possible to send her gifts, free of charge, via IT3C, an online-present giving service. Well, now IT3C is open to everyone to send virtual presents to friends, partners or relatives over the Internet, simply by going to the Freeserve Entertainment channel. There's a whole variety of gifts that can be sent, under a large number of headings – you could send a cleaner to a messy acquaintance, a sunflower, a big hug, a calculator or even two Stealth bombers! The choice is yours.

Once you've decided exactly what free virtual present you'd like to send and who is to receive it, the process is very simple: just follow the five simple steps. First, enter the name and email address of the person you'd like to send the gift to. Then choose the colour of wrapping paper: there are seven to decide between. Next it's time to fill in the gift tag. Write your message in the box, and it'll be attached to your gift – say 'Happy Birthday', 'Get well soon', or whatever takes your fancy! After this, it's time to attach an 'emotion' to the package, be it optimism, warmth or even paranoia! Just use the drop down menus to say exactly how you are feeling.

Next, you need to tell IT3C the approximate area where the package is to be delivered. This can be anywhere in the world, from Atlanta to Zurich, Perth to Peru – just choose your destination from the drop down lists. Finally, enter your full name and your email address and then tick the box to confirm that you agree with the IT3C policy that that 'you will not use this system to annoy, harrass or generally upset other people'! Lastly, click the 'continue' button and your virtual present will be on its way to the lucky recipient, usually within three working days.

At least, that's the theory – and here's the twist. IT3C is a free service, and as such cannot guarantee that your present will arrive at its destination safely, or in one piece. When you send a present you are emailed a tracking code which can be used to follow the parcel on its journey across the world – you can even see pictures of what is happening and where it is. Who knows what may happen to it? That's all part of the fun – will your present actually reach its destination successfully? An email will drop into your Inbox should something happen to delay its progress – and that could be absolutely anything!

It's worth checking back to see the stage the delivery is at: as the site says, 'We usually find that one visit a day ensures that a package continues to feel wanted, as it makes its way through what can be a cruel, uncaring and dangerous world'. Sending and receiving presents is an awful lot of fun – and so is tracking its progress along the way to its destination. You never know what might happen...

www.freeserve.com/entertainment

BBC

Taking care of the pennies

freeserve
www.freeserve.com

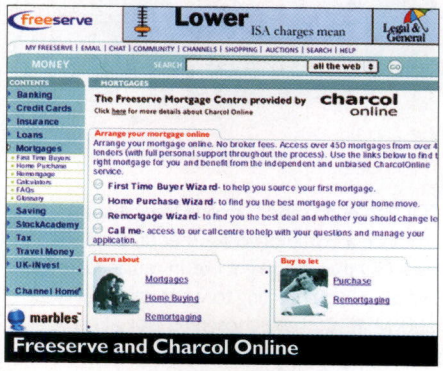
Now it's even easier to manage your finances, thanks to a number of features on the Freeserve Money channel. Start saving cash now!

Find yourself a home

Buying a house is probably going to be the biggest purchase that you will ever make, so it's important that you make it the right one. It's also important to choose the correct mortgage lender for you, so that you get the best deal possible for your budget.

The Mortgage Centre, which can be found in the Freeserve Money channel, aims to offer everyone advice and good deals on mortgages, whether you are looking for a first mortgage, or looking to move and save money on an existing repayment. The Mortgage Centre is brought to you in partnership with Charcol Online. Charcol is the largest offline mortgage broker, and is now the largest online broker as well, and is backed by John Charcol – so you will benefit from over 25 years' worth of experience!

Getting a great deal on the site is easy. The products of many companies are available – over 450 mortgages from more than 45 lenders, including lots of high-street names. Even better, there are no fees for using the service; no hidden costs means that the bargain that you see is exactly the amount



Freeserve and Charcol Online

Take your pick of the property

Buy the house of your dreams with the Freeserve Mortgage Centre

that you'll have to pay. And of course, Charcol Online is absolutely independent, which means that you are guaranteed to get the best deal possible.

You'll also a get a quick result from the Freeserve Mortgage Centre – simply fill in the easy online application form, and in many circumstances you will receive a decision the same working day. There is also a dedicated service advisor to manage and oversee your application through to completion, and if you aren't happy about completing the whole process online it's possible to make contact by telephone as well.

Peace of mind

So you've bought your house: what are you going to do about the contents? It's always best to prepare for the unexpected, so it's important to make sure that you are fully insured, not only for your home, but also for your car and other possessions, and even your holiday if you are planning on going away. Freeserve can help with all this and much, much more: just take a look at ***www.freeserve.com/money*** for some of the greatest insurance deals around, from Insurancewide.com.

It's really easy to find out how good an Insurancewide.com quote can be. For example, if you want to insure your car, simply go to the 'Motor' section and enter some brief personal details, as well as some information about your car. Within seconds you can have a provisional quote for a premium. The same principle applies to travel and house insurance – try it and see how much you can save on your existing policy.

Keeping your marbles

More and more people are buying goods from the Internet; after all, it offers a much wider choice than the high street, and there are lots of bargains to be had! But despite all the talk of 'secure servers', how can you be sure that your credit card, and therefore your money, are safe? One of the best ways is to take out a marbles credit card, which was launched last year by Freeserve in association with HFC bank, to help keep your money safe during all your online transactions with an anti-fraud guarantee to put your mind at rest.

Freeserve aims to bring its members the best deals on the Internet, and the marbles credit card does just that with an interest rate of 4.5% APR for your first six months – and there's no annual fee.

But for anyone who uses the Internet, the best thing about the marbles credit card has to be the anti-fraud guarantee that it offers, and the peace of mind that it gives if you want to shop online. Quite simply, if your card details are ever used fraudulently, then you won't have to pay a penny.

Anti-fraud protection isn't the only benefit of the marbles credit card. It's possible to check all your account details and pay your balance online, you can shop on the Web at all the great shops on the Freeserve Shopping channel, and your goods will be protected from damage during delivery for up to £500. And if you are worried about not being able to use it like other credit cards, don't be: the marbles card can be used on the high street too.

It's really easy to get hold of your marbles card. Just go to ***www.fscard.co.uk*** and follow the simple instructions. You'll even get the chance to choose the colour of the marble on the front of your card. And, unlike many cards, you'll have a decision as to whether you've been accepted in 60 seconds.

To apply for the marbles card or to get more details, go to ***www.fscard.co.uk*** and before you know it you'll have total peace of mind while shopping on the Internet.

Get into the stocks

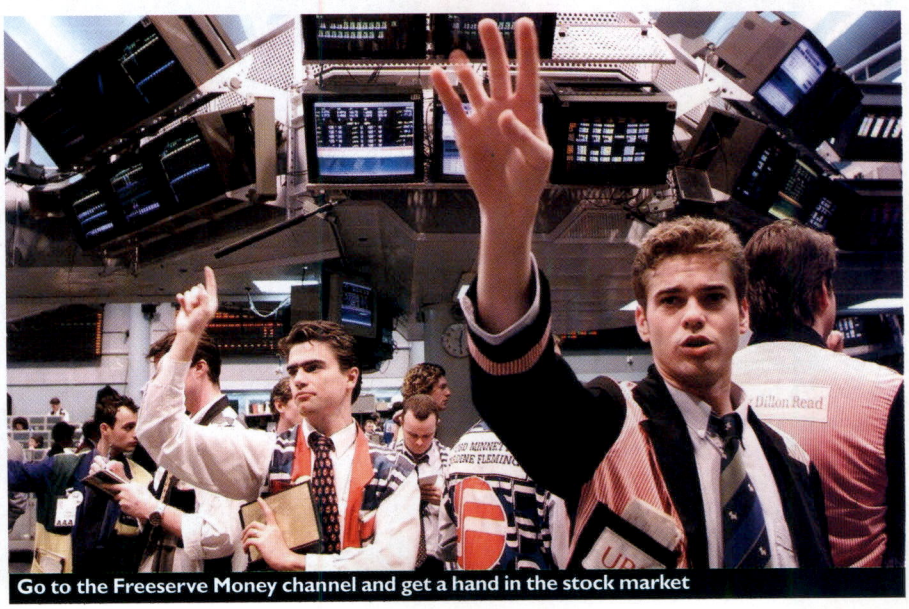
So you've got your house, your credit card and your insurance. Where else can you invest cash? You can always try the stock market. However, the world of online share trading can seem extremely confusing, with lots of strange terms and phrases to deal with. As such it can appear to be a very enclosed world to the beginner – where on earth do you start?

Well, the newly-launched StockAcademy aims to make trading a little easier and less complicated. StockAcademy allows users to take control of their investment opportunities by offering educational content on how to trade in shares. The clear tutorials cover all you need to know about the stock market, from 'What is a share?' to 'The limitations of value investing'.

StockAcademy users are also kept up-to-date with all the latest shares news, thanks to easy access to information from UkiNvest and Standard and Poors news feed. The latest real-time share prices are also available for dealing so users know where they stand at all times.

www.stockacademy.com

Freeserve plc is an Appointed Representative of StockAcademy. StockAcademy is a trading name of GlobenetDirect.com Ltd. which is a member of the LSE and regulated by the SFA.



Go to the Freeserve Money channel and get a hand in the stock market

PA

freeserve
www.freeserve.com

Go on, be a sport

What with the Freeserve Fantasy 2001 Football league, coverage of the Olympics and television listings, the Freeserve Sport channel has got this month's action covered

Virtual football

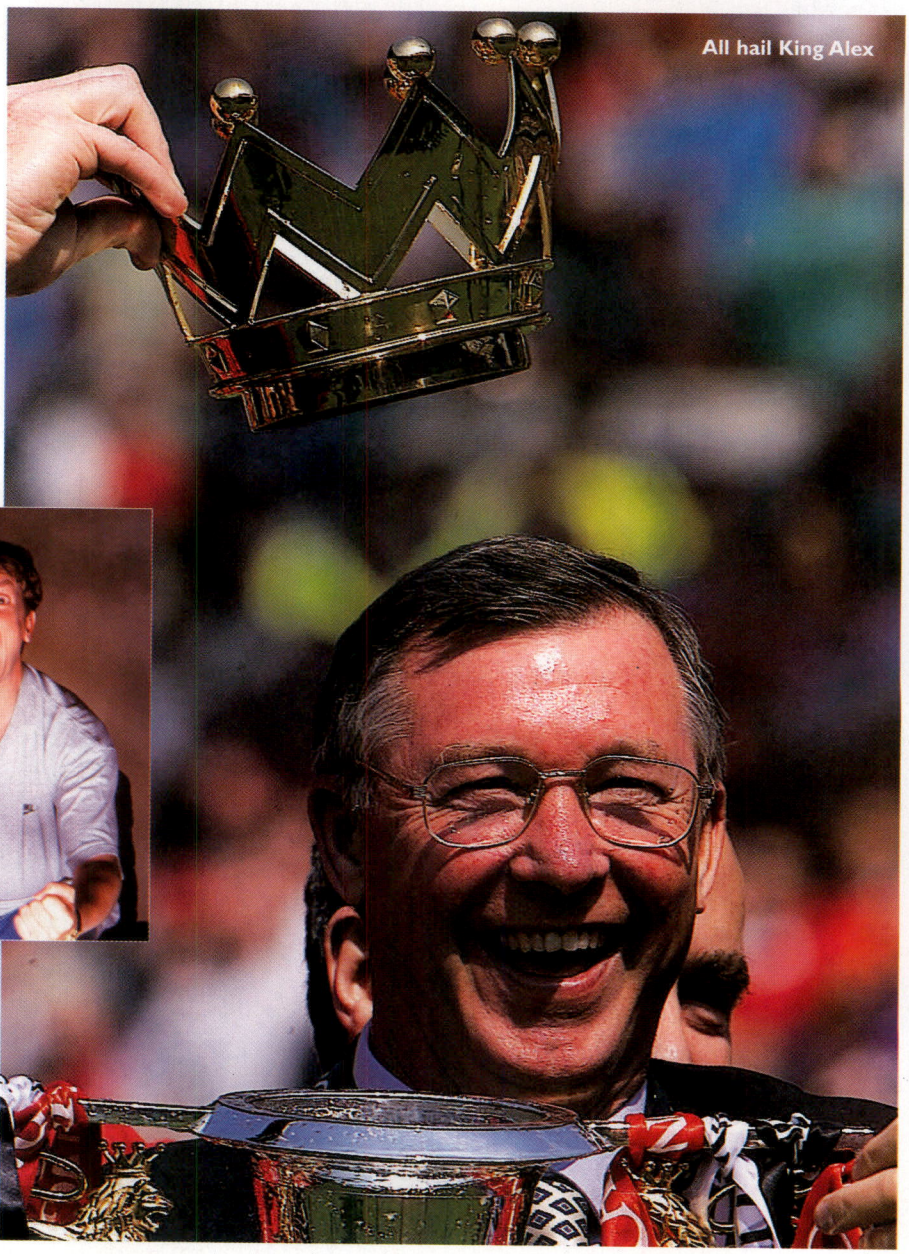
The football season is now well underway, and so is the Freeserve Fantasy 2001 football game at ***www.freeserve.com/sport***. But if you haven't had a chance to register yet, don't worry; there's still plenty of opportunity for you to do so, and the best news is that you're still in with a chance of winning a prize.

There are lots and lots of fantasy football games around, so unless you've been on Mars for the past five years, you'll probably have a pretty good idea of how they work. Freeserve Fantasy 2001 is a little bit different: it's not just for people with heads full of statistics who enjoy following numbers. Instead, and unlike many of its competitors, it's very quick, really easy to use, great to look at, and you won't have to spend ages looking at lists of boring statistics.

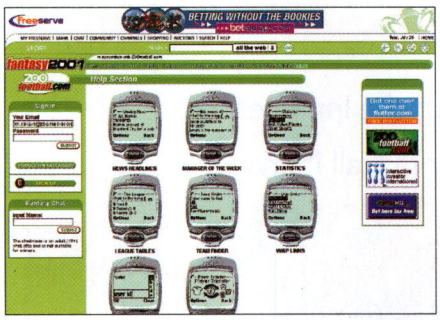
Like the other versions, your team will gain or lose points depending on how well the players are doing in real life. To begin with, you'll receive a budget of a massive £60 million. That might sound like a lot, but take care because you'll find that it will soon go! There are restrictions on the number of players you are allowed to buy as well – for instance, you can't buy more than two players from the same team, so you'll soon notice that putting together a squad of world-beaters isn't at all easy! But don't worry if your team aren't up to scratch straight away: there are plenty of opportunities to change your team throughout the season. You can either choose a team in three clicks, or spend all season perfecting your selection – the choice is yours. And there are well over 400 players to choose from, so you've got plenty of options.

Even if you aren't a football nut, you can still be in with a shout for one of the prizes. The only players who can score for you are those who are in your first eleven, so you need to make sure that none are suspended or injured so you can collect the points! You are given some guidance with this, however, in the form of a daily bulletin to let you know who is going to be out of the action.

As for the points themselves: goalkeepers and defenders score five for a clean sheet, but lose two points for every goal conceded. All players score five points for scoring a goal, three



All hail King Alex



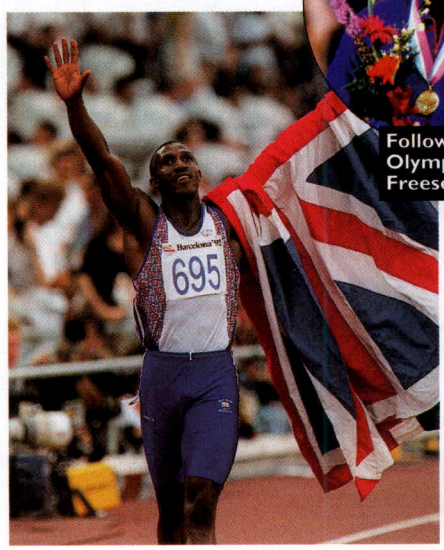
for playing the whole match and one for playing part of a match. If one of your players is sent off, however, you'll lose five points, and if he is booked you'll have two knocked off. So be sure to choose players that behave!

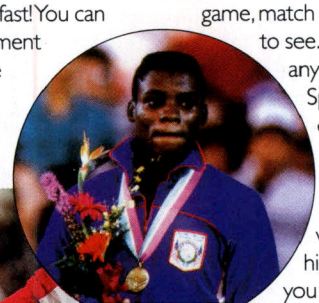
But the best thing about Freeserve Fantasy 2001, and what really sets it apart from other fantasy football leagues, is that you can win prizes every week, no matter how badly your team is doing! As well as the prize for Manager of the Year, there will also be something for the Manager of the Month, and a number of random prizes will be given out to participants. Goodies that Freeserve are giving away include trips to watch games both at home and abroad, some replica kit and WAP mobile phones. So there's every opportunity for you to get your hands on a fantastic prize! Simply go to ***www.freeserve.com/sport*** for more details and to experience the most exciting fantasy football game on the Internet.

The best in the world

After four years of waiting, the Olympics are finally upon us once more. All eyes will be on Sydney from 15 September for what promises to be the biggest, best and most spectacular Olympics that the world has ever seen.

But unless you managed to book tickets a while ago the chances are that you won't be able to make it live now. So why not follow all the action on the Freeserve Sport channel, at ***www.freeserve.com/sport*** – you'll be able to get the latest news and results from the other side of the world as they happen, and if you don't fancy staying up all night, you can always catch them first thing in the morning over breakfast! You can follow everything, from the moment the magnificent torch is lit at the Sydney Olympic Park on the evening of 15 September right through to the closing ceremony on 1 October. All the old sporting favourites will be there, including athletics, football and swimming, and this year there will be even more of the world's best athletes competing, as new sports such as Taekwondo and Indoor Volleyball are introduced.





Follow the Olympics on Freeserve

During the event there will also be lots of opportunities to buy sport-related goods, such as kit and accessories, everything you need for healthy living and Australian goodies, such as wine! Get yourself in the sporting mood by heading for the Freeserve Shopping channel at ***www.freeserve.com/shopping*** for some of the best bargains around.

Games on the box

If you're a huge sport fan, there's nothing worse than realising that you've missed a game, match or race that you really wanted to see. That needn't be a problem anymore, thanks to the Freeserve Sport channel, which now offers a new 'Sport on TV' section. The section will tell you exactly what's on television at the moment you visit, as well as listing the sporting highlights for the day, and telling you exactly where you can find your programme. If you want to view information for a specific sport, simply click on its name on the banner on the left-hand side – many sports are covered on the channel, including football and cricket, as well as more unusual sports such as pool, aerobics and fishing!

And if you want to know what television sport is forthcoming, simply enter your email address and you will be sent a free weekly update with all the sport listings for that week. To register for this service or to view the listings, just go to ***www.freeserve.sportlist.com*** – your evenings will never be the same again! ***www.freeserve.com/sport***

Pa;Empics

Be sure to stay in touch

Worried that you aren't able to receive phone calls while you are on the Internet? It needn't be a problem, thanks to a brilliant new idea called Freeserve Call Manager

The pace of life is increasing all the time, so most of us are able to do more than one thing at a time, be it at the work place or at home: sending emails and organising deals while discussing important business with colleagues, feeding the children and cooking the dinner while doing the washing...

However, there are some tasks that really can't be completed at the same time, such as receiving a phone call on your single phone line while on the Internet. That is, until now, thanks to a brilliant new idea called the Online Call Manager.

To put it simply, the Freeserve Call Manager – which can be found at *www.freeserve.com/callmanager* – is a completely subscription-free service that tells you when you have an incoming call while you are on the Internet. This avoids the need and expense of installing a second phone line, allowing you to stay both on the Internet and on the phone at the same time.

So, how does it work? Well, imagine you are busy looking at all the content on the Freeserve site. Up until now, if a phone call had come through on your phone, then you would have been left with a frustrated caller who keeps hearing the engaged tone! But if you have the free Freeserve Call Manager software and Call Divert activated on your telephone, then you have number of options open to you.

Make sure you don't miss that call

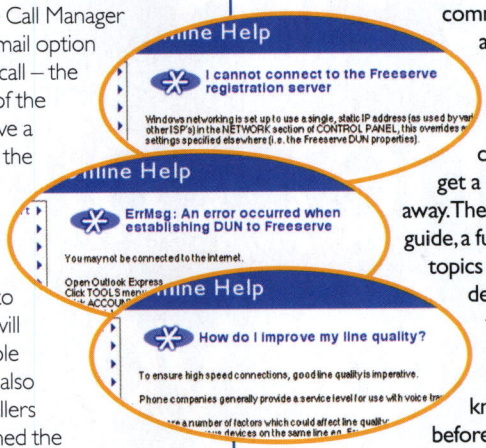
▪ Choose to take that call...

First of all, you'll receive a on-screen alert which informs you that you have a call waiting. If you have stored the person's name and number in your free address book, then the small window which appears on your screen contains the name and number of the caller trying to get through. What you do with the call is then completely up to you! If it's a partner, friend or relative you might want to take the call immediately. In this case, simply click on the icon that appears on the screen, and you'll become disengaged from the Internet so you answer it. Or you can choose to answer it via your PC using Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP). Or

perhaps you might decide to transfer the call to another line. This can be particularly useful if the call is for someone else in the house – you can choose to divert the caller through to any one of up to ten mobile or landline numbers so the call can be picked up there. And these diverted calls are the only calls you have to pay for – at a rate of 10 pence per minute.

...or choose to reject it

If, however, a call is coming through from someone who you don't particularly want to talk to at that minute – perhaps the boss! – then you have other options. You can simply click on the 'Ignore' icon and the call will be ignored. But the Freeserve Call Manager also gives you a free voicemail option with which to answer any call – the person on the other end of the phone will be asked to leave a message, which they do in the normal way. Or, click on one of two icons on the display and the caller will either be informed that you would like them to call you back, or that you will return their call. It's as simple as that! Your greetings can also be personalised so that callers know that they have reached the right number.



Lots of active features

There's absolutely no need to worry about remembering to switch the service on – it is activated immediately, as soon as you go online. And the Freeserve Call Manager provides you with a list of your last 80 incoming callers, the time and date of their call and how you managed each one, enabling you to print or file that record for future reference.

And those aren't the only features that the Freeserve Call Manager offers. It's possible to make free calls over the Internet to other Call Manager users, so persuade them to use the service as well and you'll make no end of savings! The Freeserve Call Manager also allows you to monitor a remote line, for example your home phone while you are at work, and transfer any calls that come through to that number to a place where you can answer them – so you can pick up your calls anywhere in the world, whether over the Internet to your PC or to your mobile.

So how easy is it to begin to use the Freeserve Call Manager? The simple answer is – extremely! All you need to do is first register and then download the special software (which is absolutely free of charge), and then set your phone up for Call Divert. Then you can start to enjoy all the many benefits that the service can offer you. For more information on Freeserve Call Manager and a free demonstration of how it works, pay a visit to the site at *www.freeserve.com/callmanager* – your Internet use will never be the same again!

www.freeserve.com/help

Online help

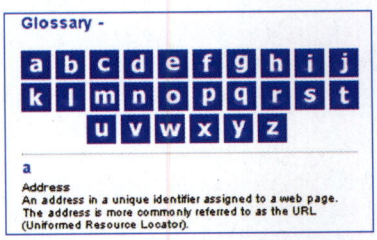
We've put together an awesome set of answers, for all the technical queries that you might have. It's available on our website – and it's free!

What are my options?

If you're new to the Net, Freeserve is committed to making it as easy as possible for you to get online. We've designed the help section on the Freeserve website so you can turn to Freeserve and get a straight answer, straight away. There's a complete content guide, a full alphabetical index of topics and a find function – all designed to take you straight to the answer you need. Separate sections deal with everything you need to know to avoid problems before set-up, and tell you what to expect as you begin to install the software from the CD-ROM onto your machine. It really is that simple!

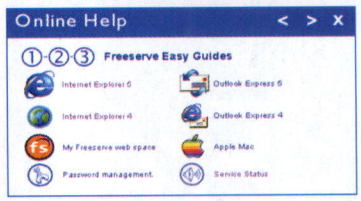
How does online help work?

It's easy! There are four main sources of information. Read through the descriptions below and you'll soon see which best suits the type of query you have. Then connect to Freeserve, visit the help section and get all your questions answered quickly.



The Glossary

If there's an Internet expression you don't understand, turn to our glossary first. It's more than likely to be there.



The Easy Guides

If there's an area of your Net use that is causing you difficulty, turn to our Easy Guides for a complete solution. You'll find answers sorted by subject.

Questions and Answers

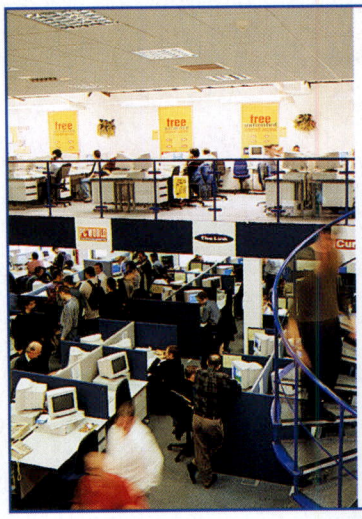
If there's a specific question you need answered, turn to our Q&A section for rapid help. First select the general area from our drop-down menu, then a specific question. You may find your question has already been answered.

Contacts

If you still need help, you can email our support staff. They're the same people who staff our phone helpdesks, and they're trained to deal with your queries. Direct email addresses are listed on the contacts page. They'll be happy to help you!

How do I find answers on the CD?

Alternatively, there's also a fully comprehensive Help feature on the Freeserve start-up CD-ROM. When you put the CD in your machine you'll be given four options. The help button takes you to a comprehensive set of instructions to enable you to get online with Freeserve.



Phoneline help

Our experts are on call 24 hours a day

Using Freeserve's online help couldn't be simpler, but from time to time you might have a direct question for one of our experts. To help you get the most out of your connection, Freeserve's Technical Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Make sure you've consulted our online help before you call, as you may find we've already answered your question. If not, our trained staff can provide you with instant answers in plain English on a range of Internet subjects. Calls cost 50p per minute.

PC Support 0906 2517517 Mac 0906 7234000

Image Bank

however you use the Internet

Freeserve has the Internet call package for you

Freeserve only charges you £5.99 every month that you stay online with Freeserve Off Peak using SurfTime from BT. That's over 500 hours of free off peak internet time each month. Or, for completely free Internet calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, opt for Unlimited Freeserve Time. You simply need to make £10 of national and international phone calls each month†. You do not even have to change your BT phone line. Our packages are available NOW at www.freeserve.com/time*

be freeserve
www.freeserve.com

THE UK's No. 1 FOR THE INTERNET

**Freeserve Off Peak uses BT SurfTime charged at £5.99 per month, payable to BT. Offer available to BT customers only.*

†Or simply pay £10 per month. Offer available to BT Customers only.

All applications are subject to status and Terms of Use, available online.

Sign up online or pick up a free CD at any branch of

Dixons PC WORLD Currys The Link @jakarta

stepbystep

Yes, ADSL is on its way so familiarise yourself with it courtesy of our report. Plus we look at latest laptops and there's our guide to email, browsers and chat

Your technical problems well sorted with our easy-to-follow guide to the Net

WHAT IS THE INTERNET?

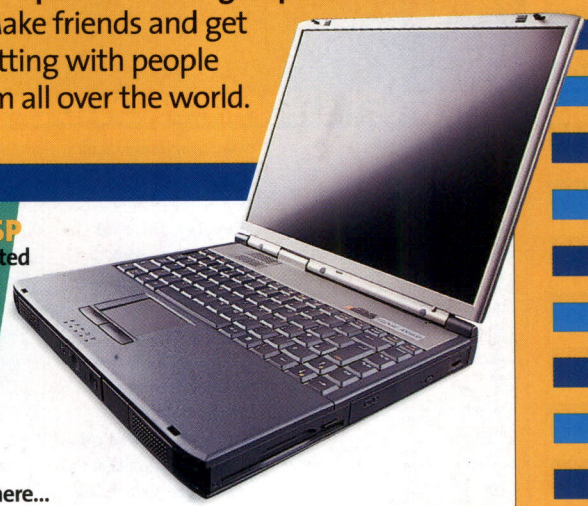
The Internet is a huge global network of computers, with literally millions of machines connected together across the planet.

HOW DO I GET ON IT?

All you really need is a computer, a modem, an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and a telephone line.

WHAT CAN I DO THERE?

1 **Surf the Worldwide Web.**
2 Send someone an email.
3 **Take part in a newsgroup discussion.**
4 Make friends and get chatting with people from all over the world.



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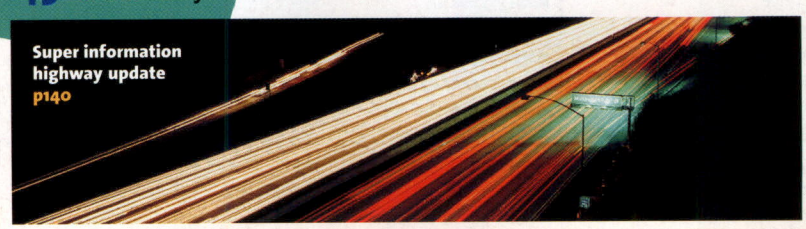


Super information highway update
p140

They'll do anything to get you online

What Service Provider?

October 2000 Is your head full of questions about which ISP is best to suit your needs? Stop fretting – consult our easy-to-follow guide

What is an ISP?

An Internet service provider, or ISP, is a company that connects you to the Internet. All you need do is exploit the provider's permanent Net connection by connecting to it.

Get the best ISP deal

Right now, literally hundreds of ISPs are vying for your business – which is great news for consumers. But to help you make a truly informed decision, we've tested the best service providers on the market.

Below, you'll find our ratings for the current crop of the best ISPs looking to connect you. There are several companies that are now offering completely free access – and that includes the price of the phone call that connects you to the Internet. LocalTel pioneered this service back in the spring of last year with the launch of Screaming.Net. Since then several companies have started to offer free calls to the Net at certain times of the day.

This new breed of ISP has started to change the landscape of Net access in the UK. That said, many of those who have launched free-access packages have struggled to cope with the huge demand and a number have been forced to withdraw their services. At the moment though, others are continuing to launch, undeterred (see ISP news, page 143). Do check that free does mean 'free' and that you're not going to be charged a technical support charge once you've signed up.

Call costs

Apart from the new breed of free services, nearly every ISP charges local call rates. For BT customers, this means 4p/min on weekdays between 8am-6pm; 1.5p/min during off-peak times, and 1p/min at the weekend. If you're not with BT, check with your phone company.

Speeding up

To say things are only going to get faster is an understatement. BT's ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) is now being rolled out. It offers an 'always on', high-speed connection to the Net with data delivery speeds of 10-40 times a conventional modem. At the moment, most modems operate at 56kbps (kilobits per second) or less. For info, go to ***www.btopenworld.com.***

BEGINNER'S TIP

Put the phone number you use to dial up to the Internet on your BT Friends and Family list.

INTERMEDIATE TIP

Set up several free accounts. If for any reason you cannot connect to one provider, simply try another one. There's no limit to how many accounts you have.

ADVANCED TIP

Consider installing an extra phone line. It means you can have one for the phone and one for your modem, so you can use the Internet as much as you like.

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

ISP NAME	WEB ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF SERVICE
AngliaNet Limited	www.anglianet.co.uk	Dial-up, web hosting and design for home and business users	Unlimited
AOL	www.aol.co.uk	A large ISP offering proprietary software to try to make connecting painless	Unlimited
Aviators Network	www.aviators.net	An ISP designed with aircraft-related content for the pilot and the enthusiast	Unlimited
BREATHE FREE	www.breathe.co.uk	Well-established free ISP. Easy-to-use site design	Unlimited
Btclick.com	www.btclick.com	The free Internet service from BT	Pay as you go
BT Internet	www.btinternet.com	Another Internet arm of BT, offering a full access package	Unlimited
Bun FREE	www.bun.com	The free ISP offering of *The Sun* newspaper	Unlimited
Cable and Wireless Lite FREE	www.cwcom.net	Free Net access for CW customers	Unlimited
CALLNET FREE	www.callnetuk.com	Innovative free ISP offering enhanced Web-based services	Unlimited
CIX	www.cix.co.uk	The Compulink Information eXchange. Provides Internet conferencing accounts	Unlimited
ClaraNET Ltd	www.clara.net	Subscription-based ISP with a range of account options to suit any needs	Unlimited
Compuserve	www.compuserve.com	Long-standing ISP which offers proprietary software to aid ease-of-use and level of service	Unlimited
Connect Free FREE	www.connectfree.net	One of the very first free ISPs	Unlimited
CYBERphile Internet	www.cyberphile.co.uk	Business-oriented, Midlands-based provider. Specialists in leased lines, LANs, firewalls, ISDN etc	Unlimited
Dabsol FREE	www.dabsol.net	Free ISP with online sign-up help and comprehensive features	Unlimited
Direct Connection	www.dircon.net	Home and business ISP offering global roaming among their services	Unlimited
Easynet Ltd	www.easynet.net	Subscription-based dial-up service. Winner of best European ISP at this year's ISPA awards	Unlimited
EidosNet FREE	www.eidosnet.co.uk	EidosNet is brought to you by Eidos, publishers of *Tomb Raider* and other great games	Unlimited
Enterprise plc	www.enterprise.net	Subscription-based ISP with a host of features including game and news servers	Unlimited
F9 Free FREE	www.f9.net.uk	Free ISP from previously subscription-only service Force 9	Unlimited
Firstnet Services Ltd	www.firstnet.co.uk	Business Internet solution provider	Unlimited
Free Internet FREE	www.free-internet.co.uk	Free access, free mail and Web space. Comprehensive service in a neat package	Unlimited
FREENET FREE	www.freenet.co.uk	More free access with a gaming bias. Online auto sign-up and newsgroups add to the interest	Unlimited
Free Online FREE	www.free-online.net	Straightforward free ISP offering news and email	Unlimited
Freeserve FREE	www.freeserve.net	Free provider from the Dixons Group of companies	Unlimited
Free to You FREE	www.freezyou.co.uk	No-frills free ISP with online sign-up	Unlimited
Freewire FREE	www.freewire.net	Free ISP with no sign-up requirements	Unlimited
Freezone FREE	www.freezone.co.uk	A free ISP offering the usual package in a smart format	Unlimited
Gateway 2000 FREE	www.ukgateway.net	An ISP service from the hardware retailers of the same name. Packaged with Gateway computers	Unlimited

ISPs explained Using our easy-to-follow guide

FREE CONNECTIONS
There are now many companies that will get you on to the Internet without charging a subscription fee – the only thing you pay for is the price of the phone call that connects you.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
Despite the plethora of free ISPs springing up, there are still many which charge a flat monthly fee. These generally offer free technical support; most free ISPs charge by the minute.

CONTENT PROVIDERS
Content providers also charge to get you online, but provide exclusive content to members, and a sense of 'community'.

How the tables work

Description
A brief description of the services offered by the ISP in question.

Type of service
Tells you whether there is any restriction on how often you can use the Internet.

Phone number
The number to ring if you want to sign up.

Email addresses
Some service providers give you only one email address, others provide as many as you want.

Content
Outlines whether the service provider in question provides its own content and whether it is exclusive to its users.

Macintosh support
Not all service providers offer software and technical support for Macs, preferring to concentrate on PCs – so be sure to check this column out if you're an Apple user.

Web space
If you are interested in designing your own Web page, most Internet Service Providers will give you space to store it on. 2Mb should be enough for most people's requirements.

Set-up fee
Some ISPs charge a fee to open an account.

Monthly charge
If you don't go with a free ISP, then you'll pay a set amount per month to be online.

Phone support charges
Technical support is great – as long as you're not having to pay a fortune to benefit from it. Find out how much free service providers charge per minute for calls to their technical support desks.

Telephone support hours
The hours when the technical support desk will be open to take your calls.

Our ISP testing is carried out by NetBasics, an independent company specialising in providing ISP information for consumers and businesses. NetBasics makes every effort to ensure that the data presented to you is correct. The publishers of *the Net* and NetBasics cannot be held liable for any damages caused by the publication of this data. Any Internet service provider that wishes to be included in the evaluation programme should contact eval@netbasics.com **For more information on NetBasics, visit its Web site at *www.netbasics.com*.**

	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CONTENT	MAC SUPPORT	WEB SPACE	SET-UP FEE	MONTHLY CHARGE	PHONE SUPPORT CHARGES	PHONE SUPPORT HOURS
	01473 211922	1	None	Yes	5Mb	0	11.75	Mobile	9-5 M-F, 8-9 S-S
	0800 3765432	5	Massive amount of content	Yes	10Mb	0	16.95	Free	8-10.30M-F 9-9.30S-S
	0700 2842867	1	'Flightalogue' lists a host of goodies	No	15Mb	0	11.75	Standard	9-9 7 days
	0800 2983030	5	Entertainment, sport, shopping, finance etc	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
	0800 800001	Unlimited	From Excite	Yes	0	0	0	50p per minute	8-12 Midnight
	0800 800001	5	None	Yes	10Mb	0	11.75	Local	24/7
	0845 3063636	5	Online dating, Bunshopping, *The Sun* online etc	Yes	25Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
	0800 0923 001	5	Channels and account administration	No	20 Mb	0	0	National	24/7
	020 73358300	5	Chat servers, channels, services, Web news	Yes	20Mb	0	0	Free	24/7
	0845 3555050	Unlimited	None	Yes	30Mb	0	17.61	Local call	9-10 M-F, 12-6 S-S
	0800 3582828	Unlimited	None	Yes	25Mb	0	8.99	Free	24/7
	0990 000200	5	A large range of channels and a search engine	No	10Mb	0	16.95	National	8-12 Midnight
	Sign up online	Unlimited	Channel-based content provided by Virgin	No	Unlimited	0	0	Unavailable	24/7
	01543 454840	1	None	Yes	0.1Mb	0	11.74	Standard	8.30-6 M-F
	Sign up online	Unlimited	None	No	Unlimited	0	0	Metered	24/7
	0800 0720000	Unlimited	User zone containing handy member services	Yes	20Mb	0	13.50	Local	9-9 7days
	020 76814444	Unlimited	None	Yes	2Mb	0	11.99	Free	24/7
	Sign up online	Unlimited	Free access to the Mplayer games network	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
	01624 677666	Unlimited	None	Yes	5Mb	0	11.75	Local	9-10 M-F 10-4 S-S
	0800 0737800	Unlimited	None	Yes	15Mb	0	0	National	7-11, 7 Days
	0113 294 4224	Unlimited	Search engines and support	Yes	10Mb	0	12.50	Local	Business hours
	Sign up online	1	Newsgroups and IE5 download	No	10Mb	0	0	Metered	24/7
	08700 722622	Unlimited	Games links and independent status	Yes	20Mb	0	0	National rates	9-6 7 days
	0870 7060504	5	None	Yes	Unlimited	0	0	Premium rate	24/7
	0990 500049	Unlimited	Extensive channel-based content	Yes	15Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
	Sign up online	Unlimited	Search engine page and technical support	No	10Mb	0	0	Available soon	n/a
	Sign up online	Unlimited	None	No	15Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
	0870 7441111	Unlimited	On-site search engine access	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
	At Gateway Stores	Unlimited	None	No	10Mb	0	0	Free	24/7

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

ISP NAME	WEB ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF SERVICE
Go Free **FREE**	***www.gofree.co.uk***	Free ISP offering online sign-up, complete with helpline	Unlimited
IC24 **FREE**	***www.ic24.net***	The free ISP service of Mirror Group Newspapers	Unlimited
LineOne **FREE**	***www.lineone.net***	BT's formerly paid-for home-user Internet service is now free	Unlimited
London Web Comm Ltd	***www.londonweb.net***	Useful London Local Directory will help you find everything from a plumber to an accountant	Unlimited
Netcom	***www.netcom.net.uk***	A comprehensive range of services to the home and business user	Unlimited
Net Communications Ltd	***www.netcom.co.uk***	Norwich-based ISP offering a comprehensive range of services	Unlimited
Nildram	***www.nildram.net***	Subscription-based ISP with a Low User option	Unlimited
OrbitalNet	***www.orbitalnet.co.uk***	Subscription-based ISP with a range of account options to suit any needs	Unlimited
Paradise Internet Network Service	***www.pins.co.uk***	Paradise Internet is a subscription provider which also authors software	Unlimited
Powergen Surf & Save **FREE**	***www.pgen.net***	Powergen's own ISP earns you points off your electricity bill	Unlimited
Screaming.net **FREE**	***www.screaming.net***	The pioneer of the free access/free phone call model	Unlimited
Sniff Out **FREE**	***www.sniffout.net***	Free ISP with online sign-up help and comprehensive features	Unlimited
Sonnet Internet Ltd	***www.sonnet.co.uk***	Packages and solutions for the private and business user	Unlimited
This is it! **FREE**	***www.thisisit.co.uk***	End-user targeted free ISP	Unlimited
UK Fantastic **FREE**	***www.ukfantastic.net***	Spirited free ISP offering good online technical help	Unlimited
UK Online Ltd **FREE**	***www.ukonline.co.uk***	A family-friendly free ISP with plenty of shareware and gaming software. Sign up online	Unlimited
UUNet	***www.uk.uu.net***	Wide range of business solutions and PipexDial for single/multi-user accounts	Unlimited
Virgin Net **FREE**	***www.virgin.net***	The long-standing ISP now offering a free Internet access service	Unlimited
Which? Online	***www.which.net***	A free ISP from the eponymous consumer affairs magazine	Unlimited
Wireplay Internet **FREE**	***www.wireplay.com***	Wireplay is an online games network offering access to Intranet-based fast games servers	Unlimited
X-Stream Network **FREE**	***www.x-stream.com***	Offers enhanced member services, such as occasional free phone calls to the Net	Unlimited

Network performance

October 2000

Independent testing carried out by NetBasics – contact eval@netbasics.com

We test the best ISPs in the country for the reliability and speed of their connection. The tests are conducted in three areas and a star rating is given indicative of their performance. The three areas of testing are:

VARIATION IN MODEM SPEED

This is a gauge to measure whether you get a constant speed once a modem connects to an ISP. ISPs should offer a constant speed and we measure any variation. Each ISP starts with 100 percent and loses position the greater the variance in connection. This is achieved by comparison so that no ISP is favoured above others.

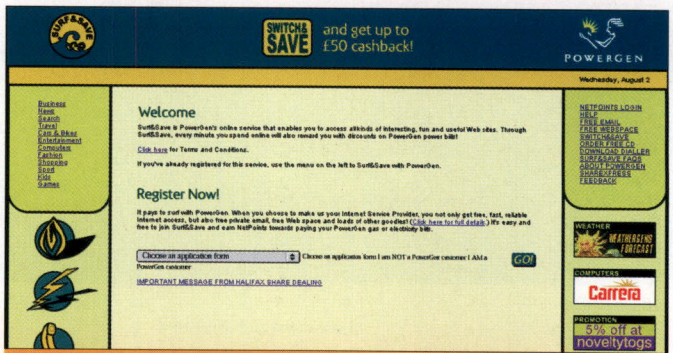
VARIATION IN TIME TO CONNECT

This section of the test measures the variation in how long it takes to get connected to your ISP. The reading is taken from the stage between clicking 'Connect' and then physically connecting.

AVAILABILITY

There's nothing more frustrating than dialling your ISP and finding you can't actually get through and on to the Internet. This area measures how many times an ISP refuses to connect, either through the engaged tone, or if it does not respond correctly to modem signals. The results are combined into a single reading giving us a fair way to chart ISPs based on relevant aspects of their dial-in service.

The results shown in the chart (right) are based on a sample of 50 ISPs from ongoing tests.



1	Surf & Save	★★★★★	26	Freenet	★★★★
2	Netcom	★★★★★	27	Freeserve	★★★★
3	Net Commun.	★★★★★	28	Free to You	★★★★
4	FirstNet	★★★★★	29	Paradise Internet	★★★★
5	UUNet	★★★★★	30	Dabsol	★★★★
6	Cyberphile	★★★★★	31	Bun	★★★★
7	AngliaNet	★★★★★	32	Eidosnet	★★★★
8	Wireplay	★★★★★	33	Easynet	★★★
9	Nildram	★★★★★	34	Go Free	★★★
10	BT Internet	★★★★★	35	Compuserve	★★★
11	LineOne	★★★★★	36	Breathe	★★★
12	Enterprise	★★★★★	37	AOL	★★★
13	Aviators Network	★★★★★	38	Virgin Net	★★★
14	Direct Connection	★★★★★	39	UK Online	★★★
15	Callnet	★★★★★	40	ClaraNet	★★★
16	London Web	★★★★★	41	Screaming.net	★★★
17	Gateway 2000	★★★★★	42	The X-Stream Network	★★★
18	Sonnet Internet	★★★★★	43	Which? Online	★★
19	Freewire	★★★★★	44	Orbitalnet	★★
20	Free Internet	★★★★★	45	CIX	★★
21	This is it!	★★★★★	46	Cable and Wireless	★★
22	BT Click	★★★★	47	IC24	★★
23	Free Online	★★★★	48	Freezone	★★
24	Sniff Out	★★★★	49	Connect Free	★★
25	F9 Free	★★★★	50	UK Fantastic	★★

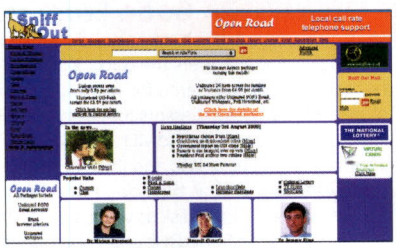
what service provider?

PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CONTENT	MAC SUPPORT	WEB SPACE	SET-UP FEE	MONTHLY CHARGE	PHONE SUPPORT CHARGES	PHONE SUPPORT HOURS
Sign up online	Unlimited	None	No	20Mb	0	0	Metered	24/7
0870 9090262	Unlimited	Channel based content with news, sport, weather	No	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0800 111210	5	News, shopping, sport, community etc	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	8-Midnight M-Sa
020 83494500	3	None	Yes	5Mb	17.63	14.68	Standard	9-9 M-Sa
0870 5668008	20	A business oriented portal site	Yes	25Mb	0	14.95	National	24/7
01603 444444	4	None	No	20Mb	25.00	12.50	Local	Business hours
0800 0720460	Unlimited	Product and service information	Yes	25Mb	0	11.75	Local	8-9 (7 days)
01233 646505	5	None	Yes	5Mb	0	0	Local	Business hours
01256 414863	1	None	Yes	5Mb	17.63	9.40	National/email	11-7 M-F
0870 6060653	5	Channel-based content with searches. Extensive	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
Sign up at Tempo	Unlimited	Travel, entertainment, business, sport etc	No	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
01884 742510	Unlimited	Channel based layout with news, sport etc	Yes	20Mb	0	0	National	24/7
020 78912000	Unlimited	None	Yes	5Mb	0	12.50	National	9-9 M-S
0906 9124000	Unlimited	None	No	20Mb	0	0	£1 per minute	24/7
Sign up online	Unlimited	None	Yes	5Mb	0	0	£1 per minute	24/7
01749 333333	1	None	Yes	Unlimited	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
08702 424220	12	None	No	50Mb	Call	Call	Call	9-8 M-F, 10-6 Sa
0500 558800	5	Several Virgin channels	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0645 830240	1	Online shopping and consumer affairs content	Yes	2Mb	11.75	14.75	Free	24/7
0845 757 7577	0	Games news, games chat, games add-ons	No	0	0	0	50p per minute	12pm-12 am, 7 days
0870 7306466	1	Chat, news, lifestyle, shopping, etc	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7

ISP NEWS IN BRIEF
All the service provider news you need

Sniff out unmetered access

Even though many ISPs are being forced to withdraw unmetered services (CIX being one of the latest), Sniff Out has just launched six new low-cost access packages. Options include Time-Out, a monthly charge of £3.99 (plus a BT SurfTime charge of £5.99) for unlimited unmetered access every evening from 6pm-8am and at weekends; and AnyTime, offering unmetered access 24/7 for £4.99 a month (plus a £19.99 SurfTime charge). ***www.sniffout.net***



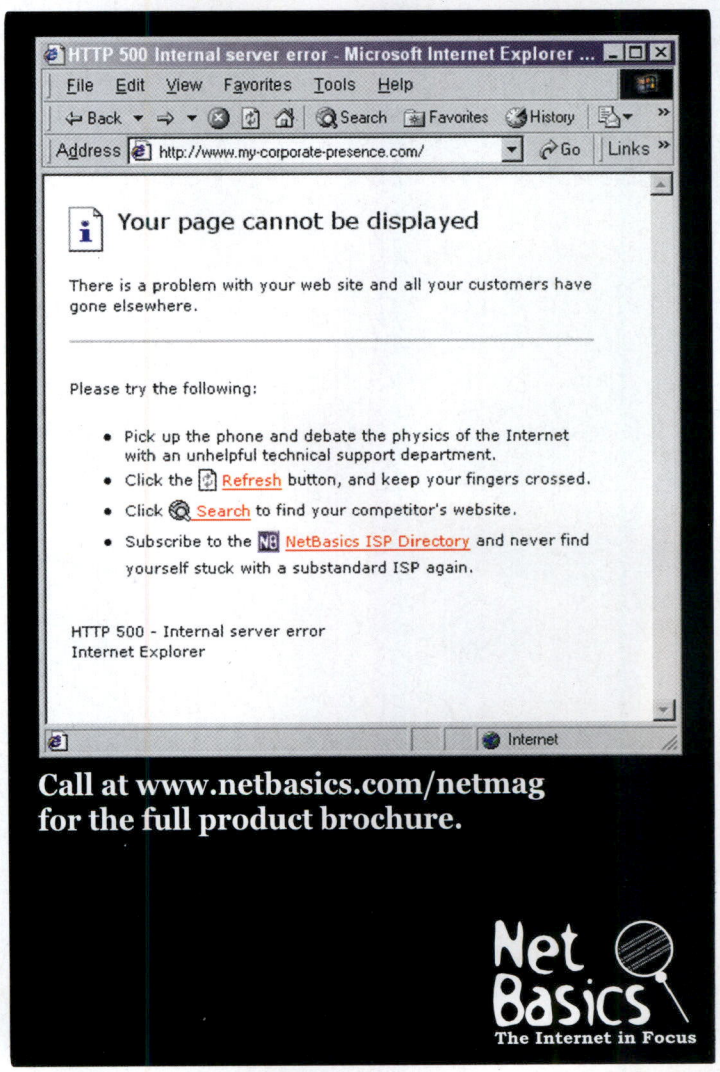
Virgin Net takeover

UK cable company NTL is taking over the Virgin Net ISP. The value of the deal is undisclosed, but a report in the *FT* claimed that the agreement valued Virgin Net at around £240m. NTL gains around 560,000 new members, giving it more than a million subscribers in total. It is now the UK's third biggest ISP behind Freeserve and AOL.

www.ntl.co.uk, www.virgin.net

'Free' – that's no lie

The marketing director of the Mirror Group Newspapers' ISP ic24 has undergone a lie-detector test in order to prove that the service really is free. Jill Playle took the test to show that the ISP's new 'After Eight' campaign is genuine. ic24 offers free access on weekdays between 8pm and midnight, and between 9am to 5pm at the weekend. ***www.ic24.net***



Call at www.netbasics.com/netmag for the full product brochure.

Net Basics
The Internet in Focus

LAPTOPS OF THE GODS

Today's notebooks come with specs most of us would be glad of on the desktop. But what to buy? We pick out some star performers

Do you need a notebook PC? In fact, for many people, a more relevant question is 'Do you still need a desktop PC?'. Notebooks are fast becoming the computers of choice for many people, thanks to the narrowing performance gap between laptops and desktops. The latest notebooks sport 14.1in or larger displays, which are at least equivalent to standard desktop monitors, and have similarly powered processors, speed and multimedia capabilities. Even value category notebooks, with a sub-£1,000 price, are well specified, with Celeron or K6-2 CPUs, 6Gb or larger hard drives and expansion potential.

FORM FACTOR

If you are buying a notebook for occasionally bringing work home, you may not mind having a 'desktop replacement' notebook that is better featured, but heavier. But if you want to use it on the go, lightness becomes more important. Notebooks now come in ultra-portable 'thin-and-light' formats, as well as hybrid formats with thin, detachable wedges that let you use it either as a desktop replacement or as a portable.

When it comes to the CPU, try and get as fast a processor as your budget can afford, though be aware that the real advantage of a 750MHz Pentium III over a 450MHZ Pentium II is hard to spot if all you use is Word or Excel. Intel dominates the mobile processor market but, just recently, rival AMD has begin to make inroads here.

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Unlike desktops, for which the display and input device – even the case itself – can be replaced, notebooks are much more difficult to upgrade due to their integrated and highly proprietary designs. And, finally, because notebooks are such personal devices, it's vital that you try the notebook in a showroom to make sure you're happy with it.

HP OMNIBOOK 6000 From £1400

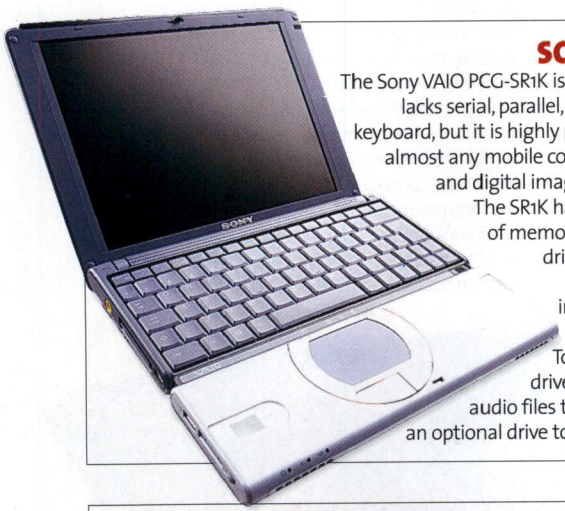
HP has plenty of notebook expertise, demonstrated by the sleek OmniBook 6000. HP offers the 6000 with four different processors: the 550MHz mobile Celeron for value, and 600, 650 and 700MHz mobile Pentium III processors for performance – and the 700MHz chip can drop down to 550MHz to save power when running from batteries. You get 128Mb and 18Gb of storage with the top of the range models and, as the 6000 is modular, its drive bay can house a second 18Gb hard disk as well as a CD-RW, 24-speed CD-ROM, Zip 100, LS-120 SuperDisk or second battery. HP provides all of the usual default ports and, unusually, you get a touchpad and a trackpoint device. It weighs in at a modest 6.4lbs – and top-range models have a huge 15in display. On the whole, the 6000 has a good mix of notebook design and features.

www.hp.com

WORDS: ROGER GANN; PICTURES: CHRIS RENNIE

DELL INSPIRON 7500 750YT £2199+VAT

When it comes to notebooks, the Inspiron 7500 is truly a heavyweight. Clearly falling into the desktop PC replacement, the top-flight Inspiron is big. Not only does it have a huge 15.4in, 1,280 x 1,024 LCD display, but the extra size this imposes on the case means the keyboard is relatively spacious. It weighs in at over 8lbs, and it's heavy in the price department, too, but manages to pack in more features than most of its competitors. It has a whopping 192Mb of RAM, 20Gb of hard disk storage, DVD-ROM and an integrated V.90 modem. Oh, and its driven by a 750MHz Pentium III processor. Battery life, at around 2.5 hours, is good and it's possible to double this by plugging a second battery into the second of its modular drive bays. There's also an internal V.90 modem included for communications, and there are two Type II PC Card slots if you need to add network connectivity. If you're looking for a well-made workhorse computer at a good price, look no further. No wonder it's picked up awards all over the place. ***www.dell.com***

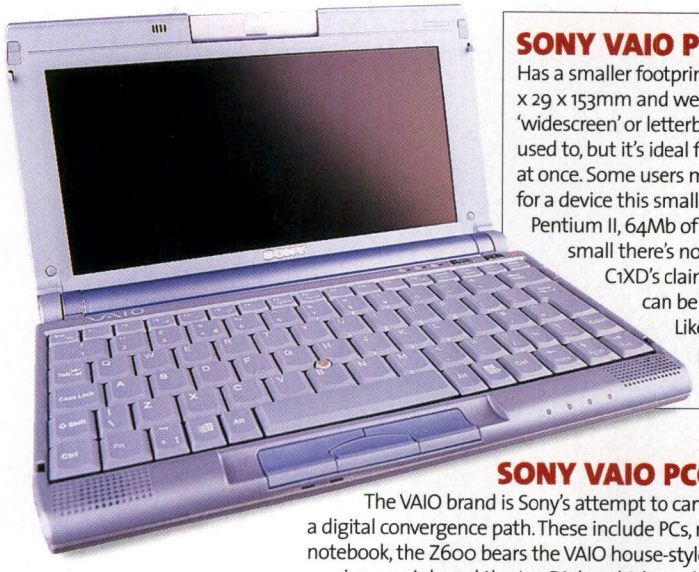


SONY VAIO SR1K £1446+VAT

The Sony VAIO PCG-SR1K is a 'legacy-free' notebook PC. This means it lacks serial, parallel, and VGA ports and uses a relatively small keyboard, but it is highly portable, weighing just 3lbs. It can handle almost any mobile computing task, and Sony clearly had audio and digital imaging apps in mind when they designed it. The SR1K has a 500MHz Pentium III processor, 64Mb of memory and integral 56Kbps modem, 9GB hard drive and 10.4-in TFT display. Sony offers two means of transferring sound files and images: a MagicGate Memory Stick media slot and an i.Link (FireWire) port. To use a floppy disk, you attach an included drive to the system's USB port, and to transfer audio files to CD or watch DVDs, you'll have to attach an optional drive to a lone Type II PC Card slot. ***www.sony.com***

GATEWAY SOLO 9300XL £2199+VAT

Very much a rival to the Inspiron 7500, the Gateway Solo 9300XL has what the makers claim is the largest screen ever in a notebook – 15.8in. As a result, the Solo 9300XL weighs in at a hefty 8.7lb, par for the course for a desktop replacement. But there are a lot of features crammed in – in addition to its 700Mhz Pentium III CPU, 96Mb of memory and 12Gb hard drive, the 9300XL delivers desktop luxuries such as Dolby Digital-compatible S/PDIF audio outputs and internal DVD-ROM in its two modular bays. Its full-size keyboard and function buttons are nicely laid out; its battery life is exemplary – you should be able to eke out approximately five hours use from a single charge. This Gateway has a superior selection of diagnostics and data-recovery tools, and it's possible to use the Solo as a DVD or audio CD player with the lid shut. All in all, this is a pretty impressive desktop replacement, and well worth the money. ***www.gateway.com***



SONY VAIO PCG CIXD £1449+VAT

Has a smaller footprint than almost any other notebook on the market, measuring a mere 248 x 29 x 153mm and weighing 2.1lbs. As a result, it has a slightly unusual display in that it has a 'widescreen' or letterbox aspect ratio, with a resolution of 1,024 x 480. This takes some getting used to, but it's ideal for word processing – it lets you have the whole width of the page on screen at once. Some users may find the size of the text and icons on the small side, but if you're looking for a device this small, you've got to accept a few compromises. The C1XD employs a 400MHz Pentium II, 64Mb of RAM supporting the CPU and a massive 12Gb of hard disk space. It's so small there's no room for other storage devices, but the keyboard is surprisingly good. The C1XD's claim to fame is the rotating digital camera in the edge of the display lid, which can be used with Sony's Smart Capture software – useful for video conferencing. Like all of Sony's notebooks, the VAIO PCG-C1XD has a FireWire or IEEE1394 port – a bit of future-proofing as more external FireWire devices should be appearing soon. ***www.sony.com***

SONY VAIO PCG-Z600NE £2040+VAT

The VAIO brand is Sony's attempt to carve out a separate identity for devices that are on a digital convergence path. These include PCs, notebooks and even audio devices. The latest VAIO notebook, the Z600 bears the VAIO house-style looks of a lilac magnesium alloy body surface verging on pink, and the Jog Dial – which can be customised to launch favourite programmes – seems more like a gimmick than a productivity tool. However, it's an ultra-portable design, weighing just 3.7lbs. It's base line spec isn't bad, either: 650MHz Pentium III, 128MB RAM, 12GB hard disk, external USB floppy disk drive, external 16X CD-ROM, 10/100 Ethernet port, built-in 56KBps modem and, last but not least, an i.Link (aka FireWire) port. You can use Smart Connect, a program that allows VAIOs to form a network using IEEE-1395 cables, and it supports TCP/IP. The Z600RE version has a socket for Sony's 64Mb Memory Sticks. The display is modestly sized, 12.1in diagonally, but Sony has chosen a 1,024 x 768 panel, and despite the small pixels it's well-lit. Battery life isn't great – you'll be lucky to get 1.5 hours of use from it. ***www.sony.com***

IBM THINKPAD T20 £3042 + VAT

IBM's revamped ThinkPad range continues to embody the qualities of their predecessors – great build quality and performance. The ThinkPad's keyboards are unrivalled, its TrackPoint pointing devices are easy to use and its chassis are as sturdy and manageable as they are attractive. You get a state-of-the-art specification, with a 750MHz Pentium III CPU, 128MB RAM, 20GB hard disk, 14.1-in TFT display, 6X DVD-ROM, 56Kbps modem and a 10/100 Ethernet port. The unit weighs just 5.2lbs and is less than 1.5-in thick, yet it offers an externally accessible drive bay that will accept any one of seven different storage devices. The T20 has an internal modem and an internal Ethernet adapter. Its battery life is par for the course – around 2.5 hours. Thoughtful new features include the Access ThinkPad help interface (launched via a hotkey), a keyboard light for typing in the dark, and an UltraPort connector that accommodates a digital camera. IBM plans other UltraPort devices.

www.ibm.com

HI-GRADE ULTINOTE AS8400 £1879 +VAT

Although not a major 'name' in the PC business, Hi-Grade's Ultinotes have been making a noise in the notebook market over the past year. In common with most other notebook vendors, Hi-Grade doesn't make the Ultinote, instead it rebadges machines manufactured by noted motherboard vendor, Asus. It's achieved this by combining cutting edge specifications with keen pricing.

The Ultinote AS8400-750 is an example of this, boasting the fastest mobile Pentium III with a clock speed of 750MHz.

It employs the latest, power-saving SpeedStep version of the Pentium III. This feature can extend the battery life to three hours, 20 percent more than normal. It also boasts 192Mb of SDRAM, sufficient for any user. You also get a 14.1in XGA TFT display, an 20GB hard disk and a 6X DVD-ROM.

For telephone connectivity, the AS8400-750 features a software 56K V.90 modem and a mini PCI 10/100BaseTX Ethernet adaptor from RealTek. You even get a leather carry case to carry the 6.6lb machine and useful software is included.

www.hi-grade.co.uk

APPLE IBOOK SE £1,399 INC VAT

It's a bit of a looker, but don't be seduced. Firstly off, it's actually pretty big (2.0 by 13.5 by 11.6 inc – HWD), with its 12.1-in, active TFT screen and full-size keyboard surrounded by acres of real estate. At 6.6lbs, the iBook is no featherweight and neither is it that fast, with its PowerPC G3/300 processor eclipsed by the current crop of Intel CPUs.

There's no PC card slot, no floppy drive, no serial or parallel ports, and just a single-channel USB port. Unlike Apple's other offerings, the iBook doesn't have a FireWire port. However, it's well specified with 64MB of RAM, a built-in V.90 modem and 10/100 Base-T Ethernet port. The keyboard is comfortable and the trackpad works well. The rounded latchless design is unusually rugged and the battery life is a remarkable six hours. But its most appealing feature is the ability to connect to the Net or a network without cables courtesy of Airport, a wireless networking technology, which you have to pay £300 extra for.

www.apple.com

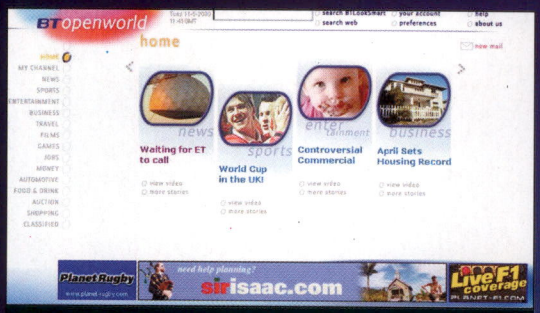
ESSENTIAL MOBILE ACCESSORIES

When you unpack a modern notebook, you'll find virtually all you need for successful mobile computing. However, you may find these extras useful.

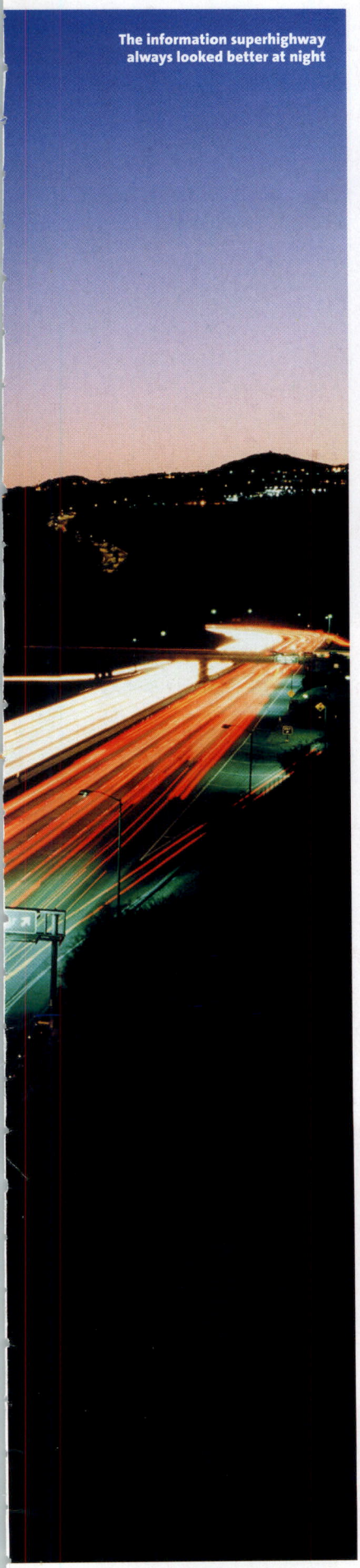
LAPLINK PRO Not only does this offer fast conventional file transfer via a variety of means – direct connection, network, infra-red, TCP/IP/Internet but it also offers remote control for both Windows 98 and Windows NT 4.0. (you also get a Windows 3.1x version).
www.laplink.com

HARDWARE ADAPTERS (to permit use of the notebook in a foreign country). Most modern notebook transformers are auto ranging and automatically adjust to work with different mains voltages and frequencies. For example, the standard Toshiba AC Adapter can cope with voltages in the 100 to 240 range and frequencies of 50 to 60Hz. However, most notebooks only come with one mains plug so a mains plug adapter is essential. Luckily these are cheap – around a fiver – and will cover most mains socket eventualities. Check out Teleadapt's site at ***www.teleadapt.com***

PHONE SOCKET ADAPTERS The latest PC card modems now offer global telco compatibility but invariably come supplied with just one type of phone plug. There are several sources of these but, again, TeleAdapt is a good starting point.



OPENWORLD The BT OpenWorld portal contains content designed specifically for users with a broadband connection



The information superhighway always looked better at night

Life in the fast lane

After months of hype, broadband access is finally becoming available. And it's worth the wait!

YOU MAY NOT HAVE HEARD OF ADSL, but you've probably seen the ads for BT's new OpenWorld service (***www.btopenworld.com***), which is based on ADSL technology. That little abbreviation stands for 'asymmetric digital subscriber line' – and basically it translates into Internet heaven for anyone who uses the Net a lot.

At the moment, most people in the UK use an ordinary telephone line and a 56K modem to connect to the Internet. This has disadvantages – the modems are slow, they tie up your telephone line and do terrible things to your phone bill, especially if you like downloading movie trailers during weekday afternoons.

But with ADSL, all those problems go away. It's a lot faster than an ordinary modem connection and is often referred to as 'broadband', as it carries much more information than a 56K modem connection. And because an ADSL connection doesn't tie up your phone line, it means you're 'always on' – unlimited access to the Net for a monthly fee.

But the really clever thing about ADSL is that it does all this by using your existing telephone line. The copper wire in your telephone line is capable of carrying signals across a wide range of frequencies. Ordinary voice telephone calls use fairly low frequencies, while computer data transmitted by ADSL uses higher frequencies. This means that you can make a telephone voice-call and have an ADSL Internet connection running on a single phone line at the same time, as the two signals are on different frequencies and don't interfere with each other. You can take incoming calls on your phone as well, which means your mum won't complain that she can't get through because 'you're always on the Internet'.

ADSL MEANS INTERNET HEAVEN FOR ANY-ONE WHO USES THE NET A LOT

You do need to install a device called a 'splitter' on your phone line to ensure that the two signals stay separate. You'll also need a special ADSL modem (or possibly an Ethernet network card), but these will both be installed by BT's engineers. Unfortunately, the need to send round an engineer means that it will take time to get everyone connected. Officially, the service is available now, but more than 100,000 people had signed up even before launch so it will probably take the next few months for BT to catch up with the backlog. There are also geographical limits to the initial rollout of the service (see p142).

It's worth waiting for, though. At

HOW MUCH IS IT?

BT OpenWorld is providing a number of different services for business and home users. The single-user service for home and small businesses requires a special USB modem that will work with both Macs and PCs, and this is included in the installation fee of £150. The multi-user service requires an Ethernet network interface. All Macs have these built in as standard, but PC users will need to buy them separately.

THOSE FEES IN FULL

Tariff	Computers	Installation Fee	Monthly Subscription
Home user	Single computer	£150 inc.VAT	£39.99 inc.VAT
Home user	Up to four computers	£260 inc.VAT	£99.99 inc.VAT
Business user	Single computer	£150 + VAT	£39.99 + VAT
Business user	Up to four computers	£260 + VAT	£99.99 + VAT

the moment, an ordinary modem can transmit data at a theoretical maximum of 56 kilobits per second, although most people will only get about 45kbps in practice. With ADSL you can get a maximum 'downstream' speed – downloading data such as Web pages, video or MP3 files onto your computer – of two megabits per second. That's about 40 times faster than an ordinary modem. The 'asymmetric' bit in ADSL refers to the fact that the 'upstream' speed – sending info from your computer up to the Net – is slower, but is still about 20 times faster than a standard modem.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

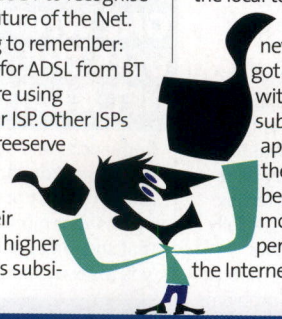
The bad news is that BT's initial ADSL service won't be as fast as that. For the time being, the OpenWorld service will provide a downstream speed of 512kbps and an upstream speed of 256kbps. But even this is still 10 times faster than a 56K modem, and it'll make a huge difference when it comes to downloading MP3 files, movie clips and other data. This service will cost £39.99 (inc VAT) a month for home users, and £39.99 (plus VAT) for small businesses. There's also an option for connecting multiple computers in an office or home, but that costs more (see previous page).

It may not seem particularly cheap, but it's a real bargain if you use the Net a lot. Home-workers and small businesses in particular will save a fortune, as they won't have to pay peak-rate phone bills for Internet use during office hours. And games fans who log on to the Net for hours at a time should also save stacks of money, as well as getting better games performance from the high speed of the ADSL connection.

FANS OF ONLINE GAMING SHOULD SAVE A STACK THANKS TO ADSL

Restricting the speed of the initial service gives BT the option of providing even higher speeds in the future, and charging higher rates for the faster service. Good old BT, eh? Mind you, we're lucky to have ADSL at all, because BT really didn't want to give it to us. Because it can no longer charge for calls to the Net by the minute, BT has to bill a flat monthly subscription fee. That's good for us but bad for BT, a company grown fat on the profits it makes from per-minute phone charges. The US has had ADSL for a couple of years now and BT has been conducting trials in the UK, but it has intentionally delayed the introduction of ADSL because BT knew it would affect profits. It's taken years of intense pressure from the Government, Oftel, consumer groups and Internet companies such as AOL to force BT to recognise that ADSL is the future of the Net.

One other thing to remember: when you sign up for ADSL from BT OpenWorld, you are using OpenWorld as your ISP. Other ISPs such as AOL and Freeserve are conducting their own trials with ADSL, but their prices may well be higher than BT's – which is subsidising the cost of its own service. Needless to say, rival ISPs are grumbling about this, but there's not much they can do as long as BT still has its monopoly control over the local telephone exchanges.



Still, better late than never. And now that we've got ADSL, what can you do with it? The flat-rate monthly subscription alone will appeal to anyone who uses the Internet a lot, simply because it will save you money. But having a fast, permanent connection to the Internet also opens up new possibilities. You can download hours of MP3 music files in a fraction of the time it would normally take, and you can view streaming video that would be unusable on ordinary 56K modems.

If you've got a Webcam, you can do video-conferencing with decent quality video images instead of the tiny, juddery clips you currently get. And because ADSL gives you a permanent connection you can leave your 'cam running 24 hours a day. You could have one Webcam in your office and another at home, allowing you to keep an eye on the kids while you're at work. Unsigned bands can set up their own video broadcasts and invite the entire

BONE OF CONTENTION

'Hi, darling – I'm on the train'

When you get ADSL installed, your Internet connection travels along your telephone line to your local exchange, where it joins a larger ADSL line that is shared by lots of other people. The number of people sharing the line is known as the 'contention ratio'. BT's consumer ADSL service will have a contention ratio of 50-to-one – which means you share the line with 50 other people.

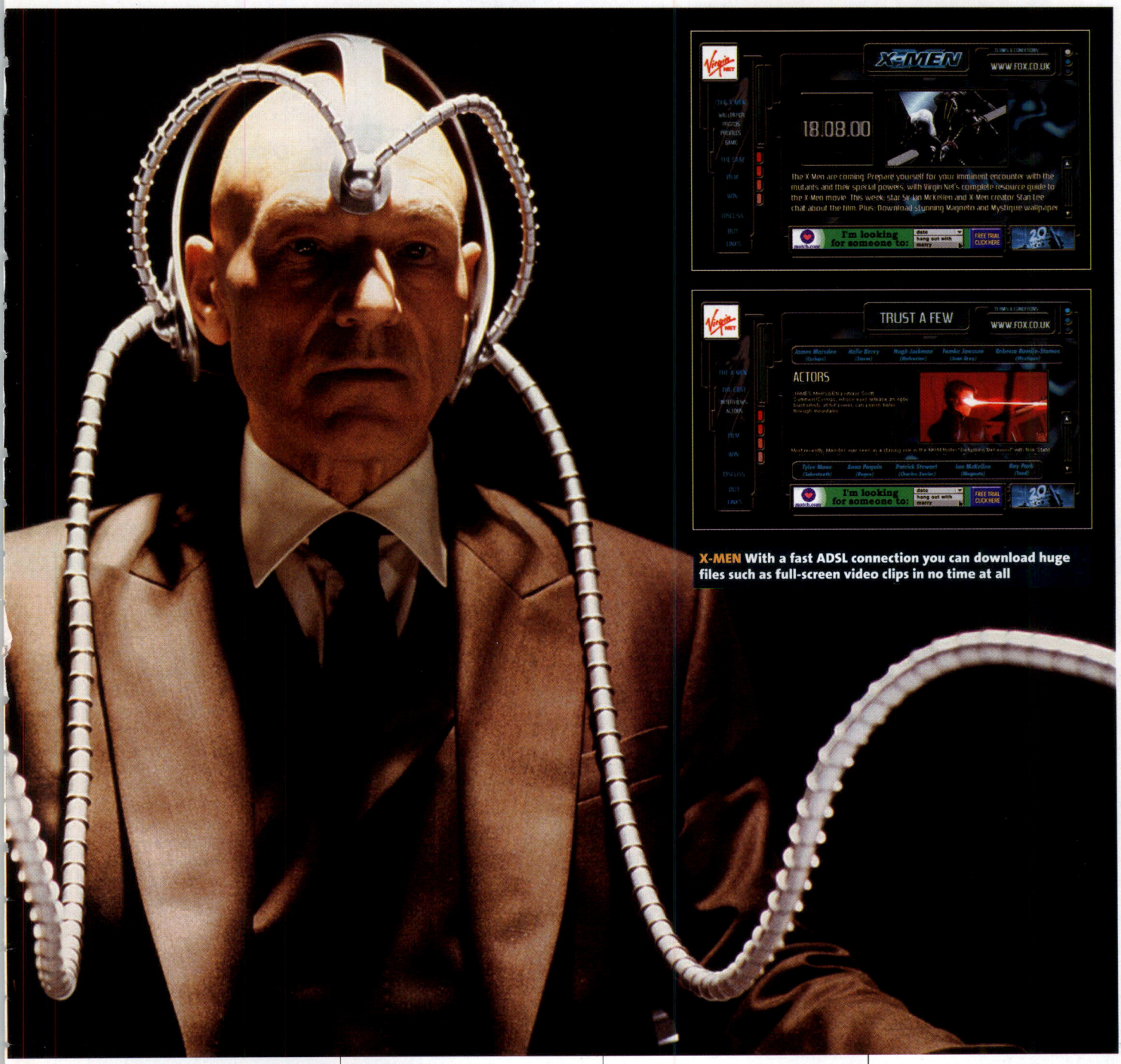
If all 50 people on your line decide to download full-screen video clips at the same time, you'll find that the ADSL connection slows down a lot. BT claims that this is unlikely to happen in practice, so you should still get pretty good download speeds even when you share the ADSL line with so many other people. However, this is one area where we'll have to wait and see if BT's service lives up to its hype...

WHO CAN GET IT?

In order to get the service you have to live within 3.5 km of a telephone exchange that has been fitted out with new ADSL equipment. Right now, BT says that about 35 percent of the UK population is covered by exchanges with this equipment (that should rise to 70 percent by next year). In addition, ADSL is currently only available to people with a BT telephone line. BT's monopoly over the local exchanges prevents other telecoms companies from gaining access to the ADSL equipment in local telephone exchanges. To see if you live near an ADSL-equipped exchange, visit *www.btopenworld.com*.

ADSL IS CURRENTLY ONLY AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE WITH A BT TELEPHONE LINE

WORDS: CLIFF JOSEPH; PICTURES: CORBIS, PA



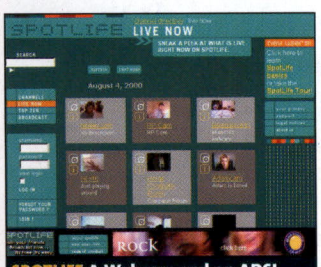
X-MEN With a fast ADSL connection you can download huge files such as full-screen video clips in no time at all

world to come and watch. And could GPs use Webcams to diagnose people over the Net?

GAMES HEAVEN

Online gaming is another area ideal for ADSL. Online games are a huge business in the US, where they have always had free local calls, but the games scene in the UK is still in its infancy. Expect to see the big US games outfits setting up in Europe once ADSL becomes widespread.

E-commerce companies also love the idea of ADSL, as they can pipe video clips or 3D models of their new products down the phone line to eager customers. Then, of course, there's the endlessly hyped 'video-on-demand' services, allowing you to download film or television programs from the Internet at any time of day or night – and you can just imagine what some of the porn sites on the Web will come up with to make use of all that bandwidth.



SPOTLIFE A Webcam and an ADSL connection will let you use personal broadcasting services such as spotlife.com.

Most of the big ISPs are gagging to get ADSL, and AOL in particular has all sorts of plans for piping new music, video and 3D content down the line to its millions of subscribers.

There's one possible disadvantage to all this, and that's in the area of security. If your computer is permanently connected to the Net, hackers may be able to break into your machine and wreak havoc with your hard disk. So if you plan on getting ADSL you should invest in some sort of 'firewall' or other security software that will give you a degree of protection from outside attack.

The other catch is that BT requires you to sign up for a minimum of one year, so you can't just try it for a month or so to see what it's like.

That aside, ADSL is an absolute godsend. It may seem a bit pricey, but if you're spending a lot of time online you'll definitely see your phone bills slimming right down. We can also expect to see prices dropping in about a year's time, when BT finally loses its monopoly over local telephone exchanges.

It's still early days and BT is dragging its feet every step of the way, but broadband ADSL connections represent the start of the next phase of the Internet. No-one really knows where it's going to end up, but it'll be fun getting there.

Email

Still not joined the email revolution? Here's how to use Outlook Express

What is email?

Email is a way of sending messages around the Internet. While early programs could only handle plain text, most can now carry pictures and even video clips and sound.

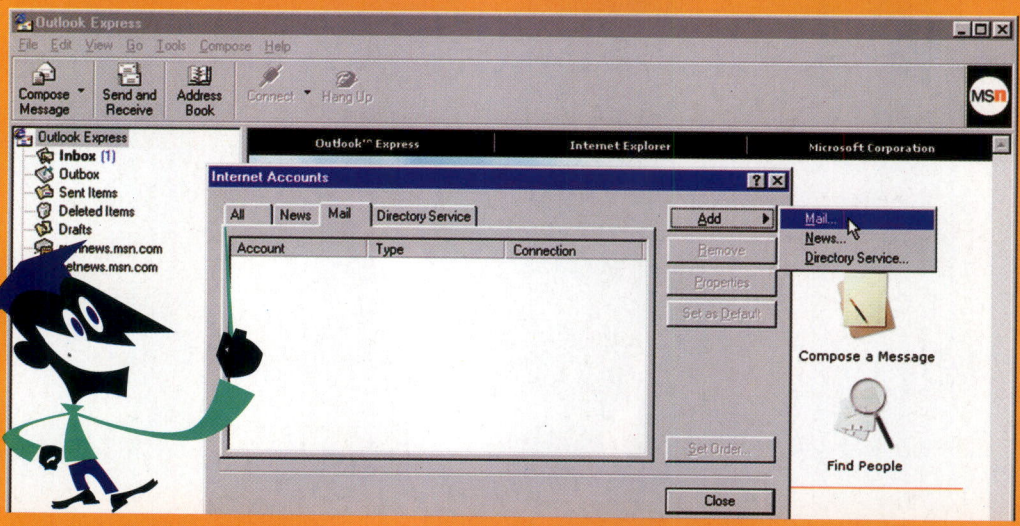
So why should I use it?

➤ It's a lot cheaper to email a friend than to phone them long distance.
➤ It's delivered almost instantly – there's no seven-day wait if you're emailing someone on the other side of the globe.
➤ You can keep in touch with family and friends, even while they're away on business or holidays – they can visit a cybercafé and check their mail from there.
➤ Many companies now rely on email as a means of communication because it's much faster and cheaper than ordinary or 'snail mail'.
➤ You can have information on your favourite subjects – whether it's fishing, the stock market, or a TV programme – delivered to your mailbox every day.

Okay, so how do I use it?

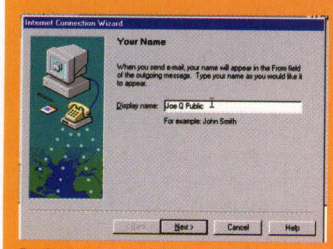
There are lots of email packages, but the one most widely used is Microsoft's Outlook Express. If you've bought a PC in the last two or three years, or you've downloaded Microsoft Internet Explorer for either Mac or PC, you'll already have Outlook Express installed. Our step-by-step guide shows you how to configure the program, create an email message, send it, and then read through the mail you've been sent.

1 Getting started with Outlook Express

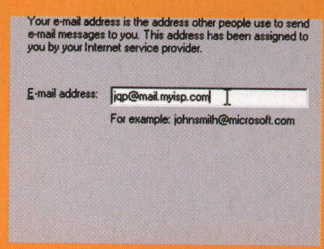


1 From the Start menu on your desktop, click Programs and then Outlook Express. If you are asked where you want it to store messages, select the pre-set or 'default' folder. The folder is kept in the Program Files folder on your hard drive.

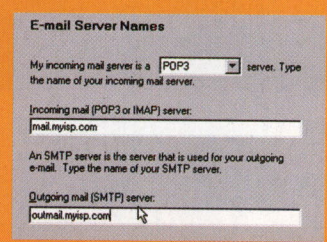
2 Once Outlook Express has loaded, go to the Accounts box from the Tools menu, and click the Mail tab shown in the picture on the left. This will show you any mail accounts you already have set up, and allows you to create a new one. For the purposes of this exercise we are going to create a new email account. Next, click Add, and select Mail.



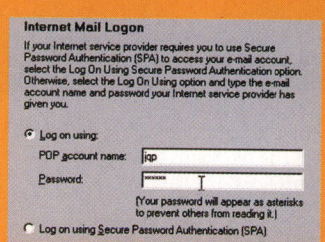
3 The Internet Connection Wizard will now guide you through the steps you need to take. First, enter your full name.



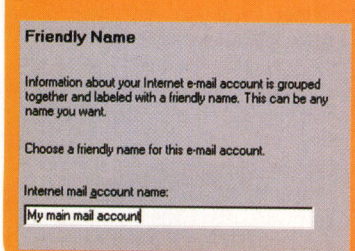
4 Type in your email address. This will have been given to you by your Internet service provider or ISP.



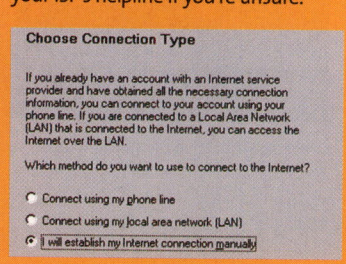
5 Enter the names of the email POP3/IMAP server in order to get incoming and outgoing mail. Call your ISP's helpline if you're unsure.



6 Type in your email address – just the part before the '@' sign – and your password. Again, your ISP should have given you these details.



7 Outlook Express asks for a 'friendly name' to give to your email account. We've called ours 'My main email account' for simplicity.



8 Outlook Express can automatically dial into your ISP for you, but it's probably best to connect manually. You can use Outlook offline, writing and managing your mail and then connect in order to send and receive messages. Choose the 'I will establish my Internet connection manually' option.

MORE EMAIL HELP AND ADVICE @ www.thenetnow.co.uk

- ★ Creating an email address book
- ★ Email etiquette
- ★ Filtering your email messages
- ★ Sending pictures and files via email

BEGINNER'S TIP

Add a 'signature' to your messages. A signature is like a calling card appended to the bottom of your email message. It might contain your email address, full name and phone number. To make one, go to the Tools menu in Outlook Express, choose Options and select Stationery and click on the Signature button. Type in the signature text you want to appear at the bottom of each message.

INTERMEDIATE TIP

Often, you'll want to pass a file to someone as part of your email message. This is known as 'attaching' the file, and is supported by most email packages. Remember that a large file will take longer to send. Compressing it using a shareware package like WinZip on the PC will shrink it, but the receiver the file will need a copy of the same program to re-expand it – so check before you send.

ADVANCED TIP

You can set up several different email accounts. Outlook Express will check each one for new mail when you go online. This is useful if you have separate work and personal email accounts. To add extra accounts, go to the Tools menu, select Options and click on New Account. Go through the 'Getting Started' steps again below, entering the new settings.

EMAIL OPTIONS If you don't want to use Outlook Express, try these alternatives for size

EUDORA LIGHT

www.eudora.com

A very popular, free email package. Includes lots of great features. Doesn't support reading news-groups, but copes happily with 'rich content email' – mail that includes sound, images and so on.

✔ **Lots of features**

✘ **None**

HOTMAIL

www.hotmail.com

A Web-based email program. Gives you a free email address, and can be accessed from any computer with a Web browser. Can also check email from a non-Web-based account.

✔ **Accessed from any computer**

✘ **You need to be online to read or compose mail**

EUDORA PRO 4.3

www.eudora.com

Commercial bigger brother to Eudora Light. Has all the features of Lite, but also allows you to check your mail from several different accounts easily.

✔ **Supports multiple mailboxes, spellchacker, email filtering**

✘ **It'll set you back nearly £30**

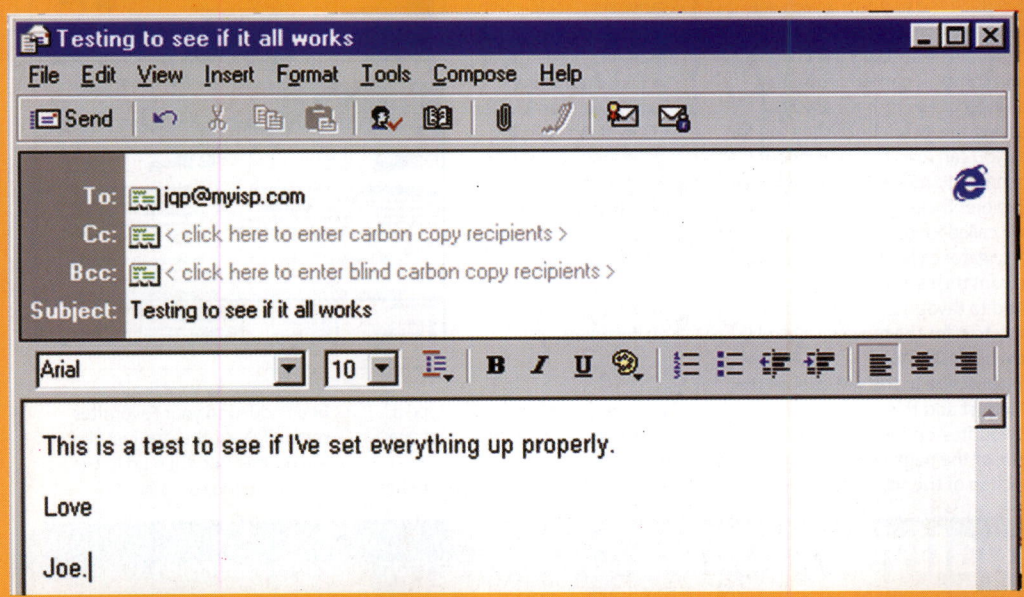
OUTLOOK 2000

www.microsoft.com Commercial bigger brother to Outlook Express. Includes an address book, to-do list and calendar, all of which link very elegantly in to the email section of the program.

✔ **Integrates well with address book, diary and scheduler**

✘ **It'll set you back around £125**

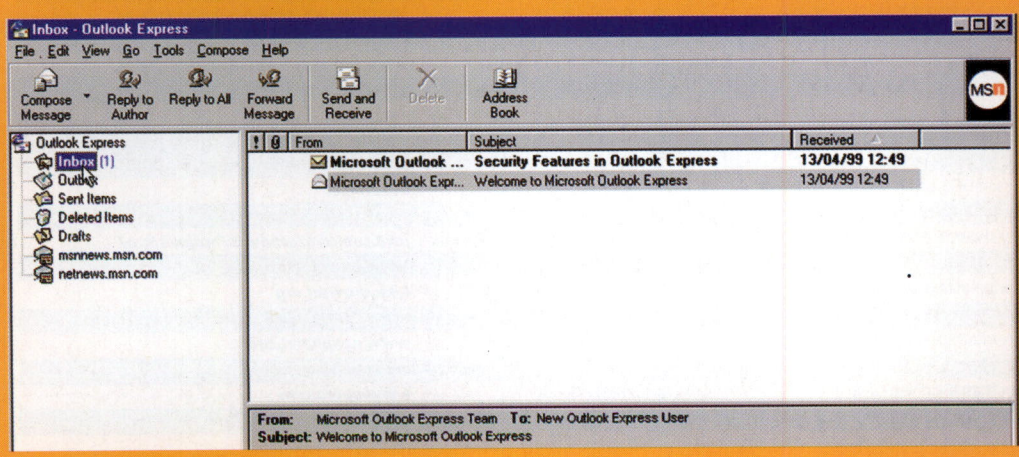
2 Composing your first email message



COMPOSING A MESSAGE

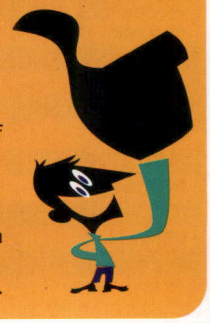
To create a message, click 'Compose Message'. If you click the small arrow just to the right, you will see that there are several pre-defined graphic message templates. But for now, just click on the button itself. Type your own email address in the 'To' field – you'll send an email to yourself to check that everything is working correctly. Enter a subject, for example 'Test Message', and in the body area just type a short message. From the File menu you can click Send to send your message now if you're online. Alternatively, if you're working offline click Send Later. This allows you to create more messages and have them ready for sending when you're ready to log on to the Net.

3 Sending, receiving & reading email



SENDING & RECEIVING MAIL

To send and receive mail, connect to the Net, then click the Send and Receive button. This will check for mail and download any new messages, at the same time sending any outgoing messages you have created. Once the program has stopped receiving mail, you can disconnect from the Net if you wish, to save phone costs. Click on In Box to the left of the screen to access the messages you have received. Click on the message to read its contents.



Web browsers

There's more to browsing than just Explorer and Navigator. How about some Opera or maybe a Surf Monkey? The choice is yours

What do I use to explore the Web?

The software you use to look at pages on the Web is called a 'browser'. The most popular are Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator. If you have a PC running Windows 95 or 98, you will almost certainly have Internet Explorer already installed. However, Navigator and other browsers such as Opera run in much the same way.

What are my options?

Statistically, Internet Explorer is the most popular browser on the planet with almost 80 percent of the market in the UK. Netscape Navigator is still its nearest rival but lags behind considerably.

With the facilities that the two offer, it's hardly surprising that they rule the roost. Internet Explorer 5.0 is the current leader of the Internet pack. It's packed – jam-packed, in fact – with features.

Netscape Navigator 4.08 represents the only serious competition to Internet Explorer. But it still can't reach the dizzying heights of IE – in fact it's slipped so much in popularity that Web site designers now often make sure their pages look right in IE alone.

You would've thought that with the market pretty much sewn up between the big two, no-one would be foolhardy enough to attempt to write a rival browser – but there are others. Opera, for example, is a tiny little thing at 1.5Mb (compared with Netscape Communicator's 10Mb+). It's fast, but it's let down by an ugly appearance. The Opera equivalent for Macs is iCab. It has many of the excellent features of Opera, but it looks and works even better.

If you want a real rebel browser, try Lynx. It's text only, so it cuts down on download times. For children (or adults who are kids at heart), there's Surf Monkey, which lets you blow up Web pages you don't like, or gloop green paint all over them.

Saving sites in Internet Explorer

Typing in the name of a Web site every time you want to visit it can be a pain – especially if it's a long and complex name. Fortunately, all Web browsers have a way of saving the locations of sites you like, so you can revisit them without needing to retype them. In Internet Explorer these saved site addresses are called Favourites, while Netscape Navigator calls them Bookmarks.

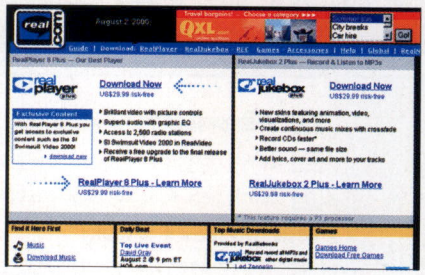
1 From the Favourites menu, choose 'Add to Favourite.' The keyboard shortcut for the move is Control D.

2 When asked whether you want to subscribe to the site, choose the 'No, just add this page to my Favourites' option. You'll see the title of the page in the 'Name' section of the site; if this is not descriptive enough for you, type a five- or six-word description of the site. Then hit OK.

3 You will now find that the site has been added to your Favourites menu. To visit the site, just click 'Favourites' and then go to the menu list and select it.

Supercharge your browser

Your basic Internet Explorer set-up comes with several 'plug-ins'. These are additional pieces of software which enable your browser to play, for example, multimedia effects. If you arrive at a site requiring a plug-in that you don't have, you'll be prompted to download and install it. The plug-ins you'll need to get the most from your browsing include: RealPlayer at ***www.real.com*** (bottom), which lets you watch videos or listen to music; Shockwave at ***www.shockwave.com*** for animation and sound; and Apple's QuickTime (below) at ***www.apple.com/quicktime/***, which plays video and sound.



Installing a plug-in

1 When you require a plug-in, a prompt appears. Click 'Get Plug-in' and you'll go to the plug-in's home page.

2 Click on the link where you can 'Get' or 'Download' the plug-in.

3 Explorer will put the plug-in inside the correct folder on your PC.

4 Go back to the site by pressing the Back button on the Explorer toolbar and enjoy it in its full glory.

Browser alternatives

Proof that there's more to browsing than Explorer or Netscape

MAC BROWSERS

BROWSER	RATING	FOR	AGAINST	DOWNLOAD FROM
ICAB	★★★★	Fast. Gets rid of irritating ad banners	Could support more features	www.icab.de
HOTJAVA	★★	Pretty showcase for Java technology	Slow; somewhat unstable	java.sun.com/products/hotjava/3.0/
INTERNET EXPLORER	★★★★	State-of-the-art browsing on the Mac	Can be memory-hungry	www.microsoft.com/Mac/IE/
LYNX	★★★★	Blazingly fast at fact-finding	If it isn't text, Lynx isn't interested	www.lirmm.fr/~gutkneco/maclynx/
NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR	★★★	It's almost as good as IE...	Doesn't display pages as prettily as IE	www.netscape.com

PC BROWSERS

AMAYA	★★	Great for those into Net standards...	...not for those who aren't	www.w3.org/Amaya/User/BinDist.html
ARACHNE	★★	It runs in DOS and is written by Czechs	A pain to set up	arachne.cz
CUSTOM BROWSER	★	Adds minimal extra customisation to IE	It's just IE with an ad in the top panel	www.custombrowser.com
HOTJAVA	★★	Pretty showcase for Java technology	Slow, though not as bad as on the Mac	java.sun.com/products/hotjava/3.0/
INTERNET EXPLORER	★★★★★	For the moment, the king of all browsers	Hard to fault, unless you really try	www.microsoft.com
LYNX	★★★★	The original text-only browser	If it isn't text, Lynx isn't interested	lynx.browser.org
MOSAIC	★★★	Good for developers	Feels old. Is old. Not updated since 1996	www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/mosaic-w/
NEOPLANET	★★★★	Funky interface replacement for Explorer	Internet Explorer in new clothes	www.neoplanet.com
NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR	★★★★	Wide range of features for hardcore users	Doesn't display pages as prettily as IE	www.netscape.com
OPERA	★★★★	Faster than IE or Netscape	Looks absolutely horrible	www.opera.com
SURF MONKEY	★★★★★	Lots of fun – blowing up sites is great	Designed for smaller screens?	www.surfmonkey.com

*free 30-day trial version available

What all those browser buttons mean

Understanding the toolbar

BACK Clicking this button takes you back to the last page. Click it once and you'll go back one page, or hold to see the last 10

STOP If you decide that you don't want to view a page while it's loading, just hit Stop

HOME This button takes you to the page you viewed when you started your browser

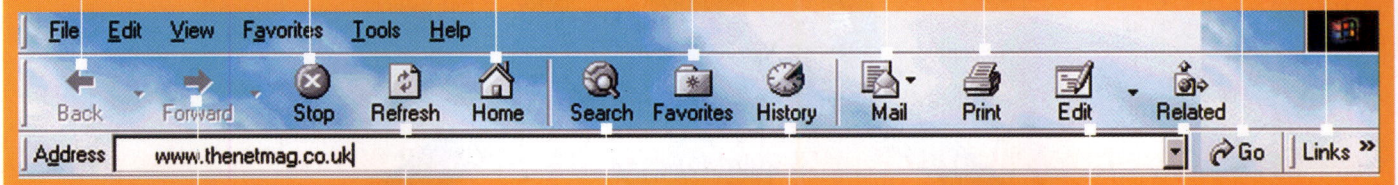
FAVOURITES Pop-up window containing a list of your Favourite sites – or you can view them from the menu

MAIL Opens your email program

PRINT Prints the page

GO When you've entered an address, hit Enter or click here to go to the site

LINKS A quick shortcut to some of your favourite sites, which you can add to



FORWARD If you've used the Back button to move back a page or two, the Forward button should take you back again

REFRESH This makes the browser redraw the page on the screen – useful if you have stopped a page from loading

SEARCH This button opens Internet Explorer's search options where you'll find short-cuts to finding what you want on the Internet

HISTORY Clicking this button produces a list of all the sites visited over the past few days or weeks – so if you found a really useful page two days ago but forgot to add it to your Favourites list, you can easily find it again by looking here

EDIT If you have a Web page editor, you can edit a Web page by clicking here

RELATED SITES Launches the Explorer 'Alexa' plug-in which provides extra search options

Viewing your browser

1 **TITLE BAR** Tells you the name of the site you're visiting and the program you're currently using

2 **MENU BAR** The range of options you can use while navigating the Internet

3 **IE LOGO** Contains a link to the IE home page, in case you're lost

4 **ADDRESS** The address of the site you're opening, including the http:// prefix

5 **GO BUTTON** Click to go to the address you've typed in (or hit the Return key)

6 **WEB SITE WINDOW** The whole page you're opening

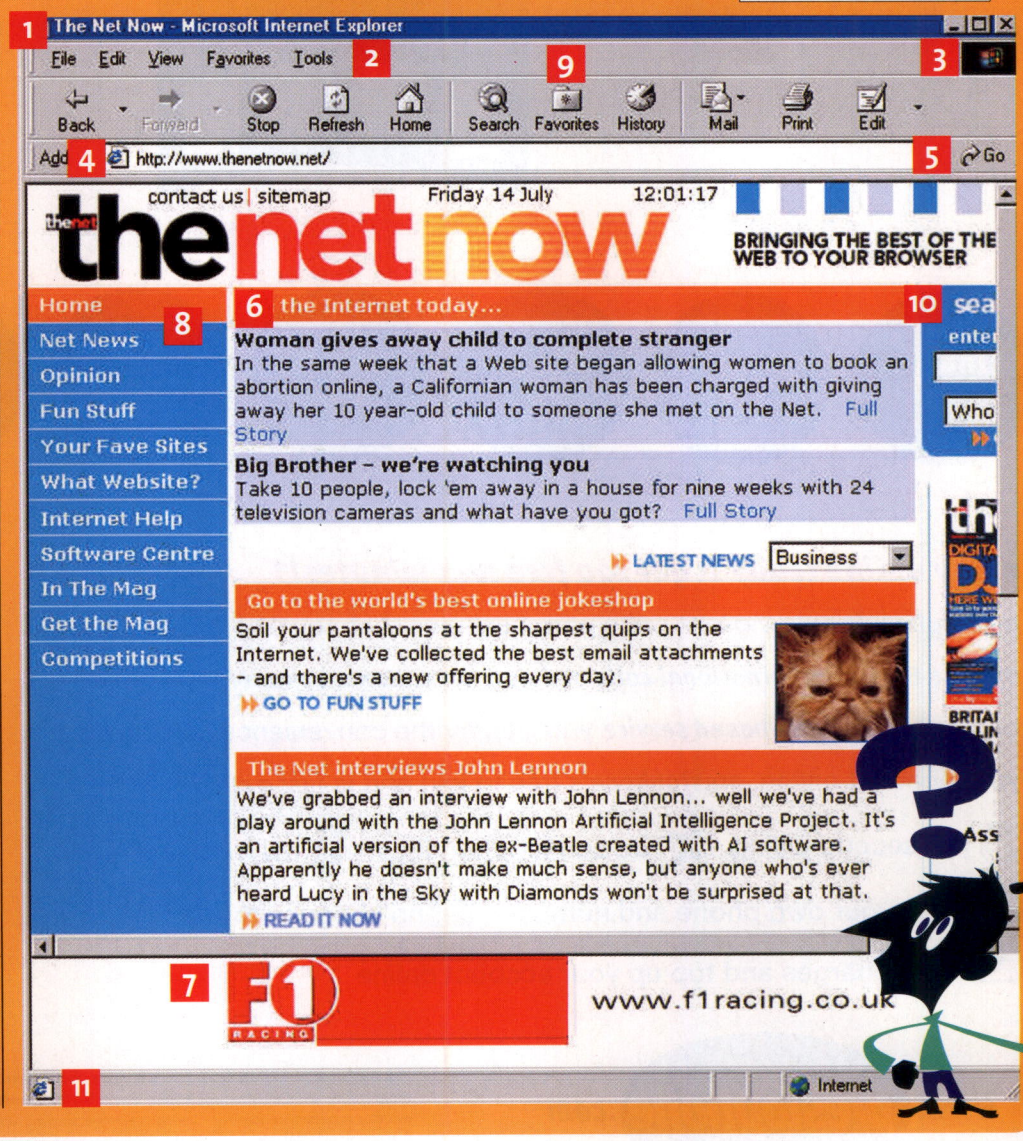
7 **BANNER ADVERTISEMENT** Click here to visit the service advertised in this small banner

8 **INDEX** What you'll find on the site. Click on an option to enter it

9 **FAVOURITES** Or Bookmarks in Netscape. This is where you can store the addresses of your most often visited Web sites

10 **SEARCH** Will find something specific on the site for you

11 **DOWNLOAD DATA** This space tells you what Explorer is doing – or which site it could open when your cursor passes over a link



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france 7p

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usa 4p

national calls from 1.7p

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*Savings based on BT's peak standard rates before discounts/promotions. Prices effective from 17th March 2000. Rates include VAT. Calls charged per second after first 30 seconds. Rates are charged in pence units. Above rates available to customers opening a prepaid supersaver account, with £30.00 and over and on any subsequent top up of £30.00 and over. The above rate of Internet access only applies to our ISP. All telecommunications services are provided by Viatel Communications (UK) Ltd, division of Viatel. The service is only available to UK residents aged 18 or over.

Online chat

Nobody to talk to? Get away – the Internet's alive with potential natterers just waiting to hook up with you

What is online chat?

Online chat lets you communicate with others – often in real time. In other words, you type in comments, send them over the Net and they're seen almost immediately. And you're only paying for a local phone call – even if the person you are 'talking' to happens to be on the other side of the world.

What does it let me do?

- 'Chat' with friends and relatives in other countries without running up massive phone bills.
- Join in an online discussion with an expert on your favourite subject.
- Ask a celebrity questions during a moderated 'conference'.
- Talk randomly to people on the other side of the world.

DON'T PULL THAT FACE ROUND HERE

'Smileys' are a way of including some indication of emotion in your messages. They are useful when, for example, you are making a joke and you want to be sure that the person at the other end of the line realises you're not serious. Hang a relevant smiley on the end of your sentence by typing in the relevant characters – but do try not to over-use these things. To 'read' them, just turn the page 90 degrees to the left ;-) OK? Here are the four most used smileys:

- :-) The original smiley. Indicates a joke, or just a happy person!
- ;-) Wink
- :-o Shock (an open mouth)
- :-(Unhappy

BEGINNER'S TIP

Don't register your details unless you really want to

Often chat software will ask you for your name, and sometimes other info. Be wary about giving this; you don't know what they'll be used for.

INTERMEDIATE TIP

Be careful out there

If you are looking for romance online, be careful. As you would with press ads, let someone know where you're going if you meet up.

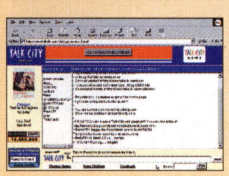
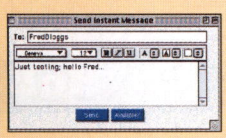
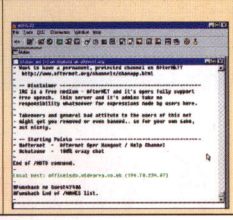
ADVANCED TIP

Go one step further

If text chat seems a bit flat, try 3D chat, where users take on a 'persona' and actually walk round chat rooms. Try ***www.thepalace.com*** for starters.

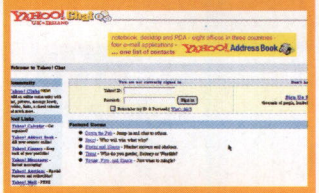
What kinds of Internet chat can I try?

There are several programs and methods for chatting online. It can get a bit confusing, so let's look at the main options

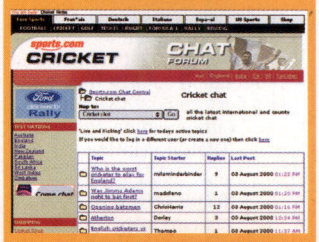
TYPE OF CHAT		FOR & AGAINST	CHAT LINK
LIVE ON A WEB SITE This kind of chat takes place within the window of your browser on a Web site. Everything you type in can immediately be seen by the other people viewing the Web page – and everything anyone else types in can be seen by you.		**FOR** Easy to use; no extra software required to run it. **AGAINST** Works on someone's Web site, so the subject will be dictated by them and private chat is unlikely.	***www.talkcity.com*** Online community where you can talk on various subjects, including romance and current affairs.
MODERATED SESSIONS Moderated chats are 'supervised' by a chat room host. In other words, you type in your message and a person sitting at the other end of the line decides whether or not to allow your comments or questions to be displayed. This is the norm for celebrity chats.		**FOR** Discussions are sensibly run. Plonkers may be screened out. **AGAINST** Only take place at certain times because they require a moderator to be present on the site. Censorship...	***chat.beeb.com*** The BBC's celebrity chat service with daily visits from the network's top stars.
REAL-TIME USING EXTRA SOFTWARE Software such as AOL's Instant Messenger and ICQ allow you to chat with other people in real time – either a group of people together, or one-on-one. You don't use a Web browser; dedicated software takes care of everything for you.		**FOR** Instant response; you can chat privately to one person. **AGAINST** Requires extra software; some firms don't allow this to be installed on their PCs, so you may not be able to chat at work.	***www.aol.co.uk/aim*** ***www.icq.com*** Chat one-to-one with your friends in real time on the Net. AOL's Instant Messenger and ICQ software are two of the most popular.
IRC This is Internet Relay Chat. It's a way of talking to many people at once using special software. IRC software can be a pain to use, however – it was, after all, modelled on Citizens' Band radio.		**FOR** Useful, technical chats are often held on IRC channels. **AGAINST** Software is difficult to use; IRC users can be impatient with newcomers.	***www.mirc.com*** Although it can be tricky to get used to, mIRC is the best software for IRC chat. ***www.ircle.com*** IRC client for Macs.

CHAT ROOMS

Want to have a yarn about some of the subjects you've read about in *the net* this month? Try these

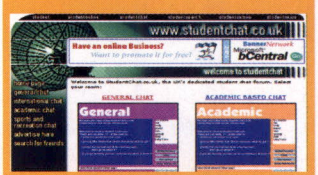


uk.chat.yahoo.com Chat about anything that takes your fancy in Yahoo's chat rooms



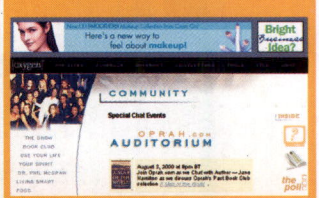
www.sports.com Whatever sport's in season, its stars frequently get a verbal pasting here

www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Balcony/1969/ Groovy Internet Relay Chat (IRC) channel for fans of The Fab Four



www.studentchat.co.uk/index.htm Students – you should hear what they chat about here

www.realhollywood.com:4080/chat.html 'Sizzling, smoking and always open' – to talk about film



www.oprah.com/com/chat/auditorium/com_audit_main.html The queen of chat opens her auditorium for a natter

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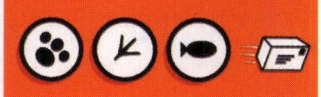

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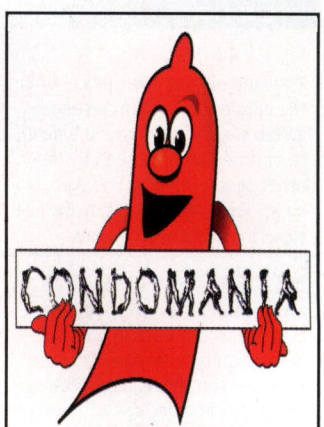

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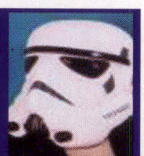

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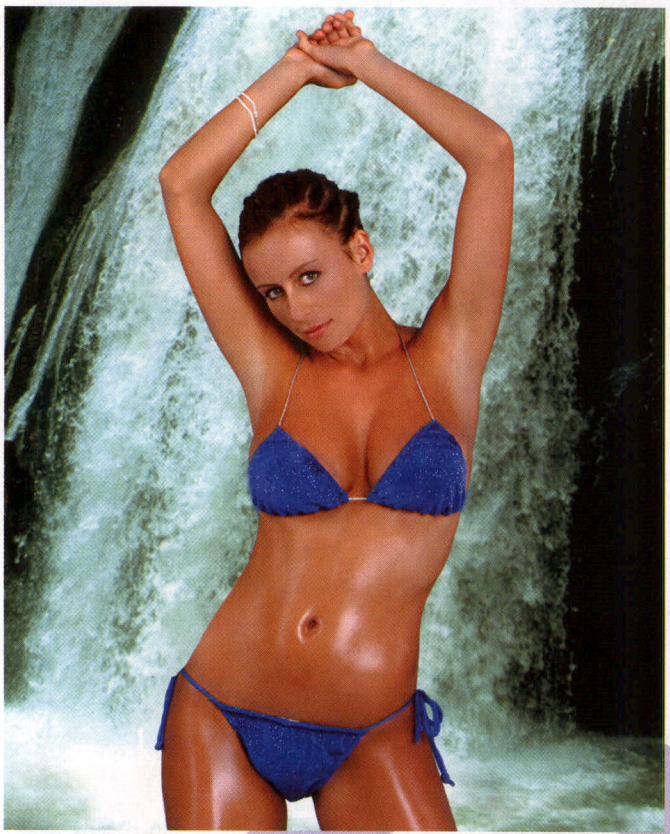
TARA

The Birmingham-born Page 3 girl who left LA to run a Web site from her gloomy living room



Your site, *www.tara.uk.com*, is a good-looking one. Did you design it yourself?
Thank you! I designed my first site myself, but for this one my new Web guys, Wisefox, just told me to trust them – so I did. But I still do all the writing and provide all the pictures. I also designed the different sections, like the picture gallery. My aim is to keep it very beautiful, but simple. I can't stand all those sites that have banners and links – all that nonsense. I get bored. If there's too much going on I just exit the site.

With all your writing chores, do you have to tap away on your laptop during a flight to some glamorous party to get everything done?
No! I do it all in my front room. It's really dark – not glamorous at all – and, until I get a laptop, that's the way I'll continue doing it. I also pack all my orders there – magazines, glossy prints, calendars and so on. In fact, you can't get in my front room for all the stock!

Do you check out what your fellow models are up to on the Net?
From time to time I do but, to be quite honest, I'm so busy that I just don't have much time these days. It's always fun to see what my friends are up to, though.

On your site, you say you went straight from Brum to LA for the beaches, sun and palm trees. Wouldn't it have been easier to have gone to Torquay instead?
Torquay? Oh, please! Do I look like a simple girl with simple needs? The choice was tough: Torquay or Beverly Hills. I'll leave it up to you...

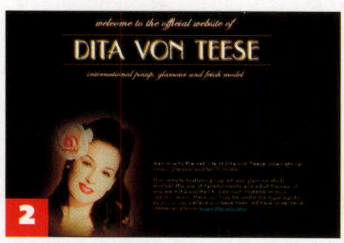
What did the Yanks make of your lilting West Midlands accent?
Well, if I heard the phrase 'please talk to me...' once, then I heard it a million times. It's very flattering though. I love Americans. They have such an appreciation for the simple things in life – even if it's a Brummie accent.

You've won Page 3 Girl of the Year, a 'Perfect 10' award and are one of Playboy's Top 20 Girls of America. Did you pick up lots of prizes at school, too?
Hell, no! But I'm making up for it now. If you can believe this, I was a shy little thing at school! Honest.

You recently auctioned a phone call with your good self on eBay. What was the winning bid?
It was £200 for a 10-minute call to anywhere in the world. The lucky winner was a big fan of mine in Chicago – one of my favourite accents. The first thing I'm going to ask him is say 'Chicago' to me.

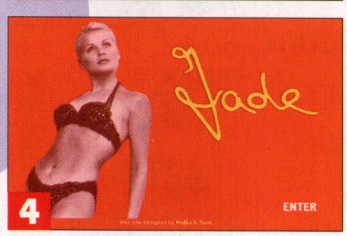
TARA'S BEST OF THE WEB

1 BRITNEY SPEARS *www.Britneyspears.com*
I'm a huge fan of all that cheesy bubblegum stuff. Britney's clothes are awesome, and I just love the dancing and the videos. She's also got this great shop in cartoon form. It's a department store and you can click on each level and there's lots of butterflies on the page as well. It's so cute!

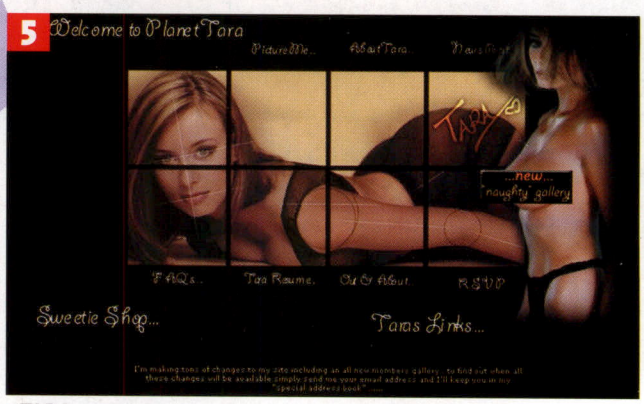


2 DITA VON TEESE
www.dita.net
I know Dita quite well, and I think the way she's invented herself as a modern-day Betty Page is awesome! I also admire her business acumen. She travels the world doing photoshoots and her site is very successful.

3 CINDY MARGOLIS
www.cindymargolis.com
I'm amazed at how Cindy's become the most downloaded woman on the planet. She's even in the *Guinness Book of Records*! All I can say is, that's my next goal: world domination.



4 JADE
www.jadenet.co.uk
Jade's a good friend of mine. She's so sweet. We always have fun on shoots together and she has a great site. Lots of pics of her personal life, which is always fun.



5 TARA *www.tara.uk.com*
As I've put 18 months of my life into this site, I've got to mention it. My idea was to give something back to my fans. I also love the way my Web guys have played around with the pictures. Check out the front page!

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